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CLUB TAKES UP CHILD WELFARE

The Mothers Club of this city is devoting much time to juvenile protection and child welfare work at the semi-monthly meetings at this time. The following well written paper was read by Mrs. Clarence Young at a recent meeting.

HOME

There is a consensus of opinion that irregularity of home life is viewed as the greatest factor toward juvenile delinquency. The problem of juvenile delinquency is an issue of the day. With our juvenile courts crowded with cases our police records cluttered with unusual cases involving the wrongdoings of misdirected or neglected children, the time has come for a public uprising to demand the safe guarding of the coming generation and to incite in the minds of parents who are willfully negligent, the penalty of their neglect and in the minds of those who are careless, the consequences of their carelessness also to imbed in the minds of children the folly of misdeeds.

No problem is more vital at this time and no subject should have more attention and no campaign should have more ardent support of the people of an community who have the interest of the coming generation at heart.

A child has the right to a normal, decent sympathetic home; the right to the care and protection of the state in case its natural guardians fail in their duties; the right to be safeguarded against corrupting influences and debasing environments; the right of deliverance from economic pressure and the serfdom of child labor in all of its forms.

The most important part of any juvenile work is homemaking educating parents to see that the strongest human obligation is that of parents to the child. If moral standards are not maintained within the home, respect for the moral standards will not be maintained outside of home. The school can only build upon the foundation laid within the family life. The home and the school must be made the immortal foundation of an immortal state.

Chester A. Lyon of Big Brothers Farm stresses the need of parents co-operating in child training, and of parents understanding their children. He scored lax marriage and divorce laws as productive of child problems and urged that clean amusements be provided for children. The last word had not been said through the exhaustive literature on the subject might indicate that it had been—on the subject of parental responsibility for juvenile crime when a St. Louis judge contributed a new thought to the symposium. He joins the chorus of condemnation of parents in most instances in which youngsters go wrong but he adds that it is "not the ignorant people who neglect their children, but the pleasure-seeking parents." In other words, selfish desire to be rid of whatever constitutes an obstacle to indulgence is not associated with literacy or its reverse, but is an evil to be corrected by other means than so-called formal education. But inability to comprehend the obligations of parenthood is a form of "ignorance" that the judge evidently has overlooked in his classification. One finds it hard to think of disqualification more complete than that of the father or mother who must abandon the youngsters in order to enjoy life.

Moral and Spiritual Neglect The child must be given the opportunity to learn of religious truth and to worship God. The form of religion matters not but it has been proved by experiences in Childrens Courts that religion is essential in the training of children and that no lasting good can be achieved when this spiritual development is neglected.

Sex

There is as much danger in presenting facts prematurely as in withholding needed instructions. Sex crimes are often caused by an effort to obtain knowledge which is instinctively interesting to all. Children may be stupid enough in their adult-planned school studies, but they will exhibit the most alert appreciation of the faintest allusion to sex. Here we have an instinctive interest. The stupid boy wakes up quickly when such interests are approached, his whole body is already on edge with nature's physical awakening and what does he get? Probably a jumble of rotten misinformation and then he finds that he is a man and now, perforce, must try himself.

What of the girl standing on the frontier of the dark world of prostitution? It used to be said of her that she was subnormal if she fell, but now we know that she is no more so than her happier sisters in society. The difficulty with her is in her unregulated emotional reactions and these are but normal pubescent phenomena eminently characteristic of puberty, and destructive only in the absence of a wise mother's care.

Social diseases are spreading, making our home no longer inviolate. Can we teach purity to our boys and girls and the sacredness of parenthood. It must be done by experts. But it must be done.

Mrs. Emma Russell, field secretary for Pacific Rescue and Protection Society tells that 80 per cent of girls in Louise Home make good. Follow up work is done for several years.

Not all girls are delinquent, some abandoned by mothers. Mrs. Russell has 75 girls reporting to her regularly, even though released to their own mothers. Some mothers are only a detriment (All socially minded people should read Louise F. Shields articles featured in Sunday Oregonian.)

Many cases are the result of mothers allowing their daughters to stay out at all hours for dances or joy rides or even to stay over night, taking their word that they are with girl friends.

The saddest fact in the entire outlook of this institution is that a large number of the girls have been forced into delinquency by fathers, brothers, uncles, and most disgusting of all grandfathers, usually in cases where the mother has died or deserted the home. Public spirited citizens should concern themselves to look into the situation of any little girl left in a home without the protection of a mother, particularly in isolated sections of the country.

A child's definition of happiness is that which suggests pleasure and enjoyment. That is only natural, for if we think of a child as happy, we think at the same time of the recreation and amusements. A child without an instinct and a desire for play would be a most abnormal and unhappy one. Its diversions, however are not always easy to regulate, for pleasure cannot be forced down anyone's throat. If a child does not like the amusement provided for it, it will sally forth to find substitutes for such amusements and these substitutes are too often of a dangerous type. The whole question needs more study and consideration than has been given in the past. The child's point of view and its natural tastes should be better appreciated and understood so that something satisfying may be given it in the way of recreation, and its amusements at the same time made safe and clean.

At the bottom of many juvenile delinquencies and disastrous experiences we find a natural craving for amusement and adventure which, if it had been understood and wisely treated in the beginning might have been easily controlled. We might as well realize that whatever we do, children are going to join in the universal quest for happiness and pleasure, as one of their rights. It is for us, therefore, to see that they are properly guided in their search for recreation and are taught to find enjoyment in the finer things of life.

Are the children of our community to be taught to think rightly and to live usefully or are they to be allowed to drift aimlessly with no regard for their personal obligations toward the state and society at large? They often reach the parting of the ways sooner than one would suspect. If their thoughts and activities are properly directed and they are kept mentally alert and spiritually awake they will be fitted to take their allotted parts as efficient and helpful citizens in the future. If, on the other hand, they are permitted to become selfish and self-centered, if they are allowed to grow indifferent to their obligations and weak in self-discipline and self-control, they will soon lose respect for all authority and fall into that

class which heretofore of decent incentives and healthy ideals, and soothing with discontent and lawlessness, threatens danger to our common wealth.

Out of which material are we going to build the city and state of tomorrow? The choice is ours to make, and we all share a common responsibility in seeing that our children are taught to reverence and fight for those ideals which we justly regard as the cornerstone of our beloved country.

No one should be discouraged at the magnitude of the task. If every year we progress a little in promoting child welfare and developing our methods and standards along these lines; if we take no backward steps and do not relax our efforts we shall move steadily forward toward the goal.

In teaching children to take their part and to fit themselves for their duties as citizens of tomorrow, we must not ignore or forget the obligations which we ourselves, as citizens of today, owe the community in this respect. Every man and woman in the land can render at least some measure of service toward this end. The work cannot be left to specialists and experts. Some individuals may be in a position to dedicate their lives to child training and child saving, but alone and unaided they cannot elevate and protect the whole youth of the nation.

The entire country must join in the task with enthusiasm and accept child conservation as one of its principal and sacred tenets. If the movement is to be carried on to a glorious consummation.

It goes without saying that those who are devoting their time and energy to the care and training of their own children are by that very act rendering the supreme service to the state, and this is also true of

those who are working in the fields of religion, education, health and ways an individual can contribute his or her share to the advancement of child welfare in general.

Big Brother and Sister organizations are merely asked to interest themselves singly in the case of a boy or girl.

Each effort, small as it may seem taken in aggregate produces a result which is astonishing in its far-reaching effects.

A small measure of service would be appreciated, churches, schools, hospitals, community centers, societies including such effective organizations as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts clubs, playgrounds, camps, and other social and civic groups innumerable which are calling for the public's active co-operation and support and to which everybody can contribute something by way of personal interest.

These are the main obligations which the state owes its future citizens. All subjects alluded to are of importance and each subject properly dealt with would require volumes.

These are essentially dependent one upon another. Education would be futile without health, health would be difficult without recreation, and all three would be well-nigh impossible without proper protection.

Child labor cannot flourish side by side with education and health. Health cannot survive cruelty, abuse, or neglect. Or if a child is to be denied recreation and happiness, its education, health and moral training might as well be thrown into the discard at the same time.

Glorious will be the destiny of this or any other nation which is wise enough to prepare its children for the responsibilities which they will be called upon to bear. Happy

will be its future if its sons and daughters are spiritually awake and ready to dedicate themselves to its service. Let us see that our children are so guided and guarded that when the call comes to them they shall not fail.

Why not go to the bottom of this thing? Why not try prevention? A small fraction of the cost of such a police force, spent on social treatment of the juvenile delinquent or the young, incontinent offender, would indeed pay for itself "several times over." Why not go back to cause? Why do these offenders, mostly young men, apparently lack the sense of right and wrong or any regard for the property and welfare of others? They have not been educated morally. Character, the only real preventive of crime, has not been developed. The crooked business men is no better than the petty thief or burglar. Both have missed out on a life training which would make them useful and happy.

Why not invest in a more practical direct system of teaching character in the schools, yes and in the church also, and in other institutions established to train the young? Why not invest a great deal more in agencies that protect and build up homes and help parents to measure up to the most important task in the world—the up-bringing of children?

How To Strengthen Eyes

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YOU NEED NOT FAIL

Advertisement for Whit Hadley featuring a portrait of a man and text describing his success in business and banking.

Advertisement for Wrigley's Juicy Fruit chewing gum, featuring the Wrigley's logo and a woman's face.

This Week By ARTHUR BRISBANE

Wheeler No "Easy Mark—Bigger Ports Coming—Would Miracles Do? Some enthusiasts on West, stimulated by large pocketbooks, have indicted Senator Wheeler trying to discourage his able investigating. By this time they probably regret it, for the Senator is investigating THEM to find out just what and who are behind the indictment.

Poem Uncle John

My good friend Henry Tunkett is a many-sided man. He'll take a hand in any game an' play the best he can. So far as education goes, he ain't a shinin' light, but he wouldn't feel with nothin' that he didn't think was right.

Advertisement for I. S. Geer & Co. featuring the text 'Mr. Home Owner' and 'Let's Get Together'.

Washington knows that when Senator Wheeler entered public life in Montana he found two political parties out there, one called Republicans, one called Democratic, both owned by copper mines. When he ventured to oppose the copper capitalist he was informed that he would be run out of Montana. But he had other plans, got himself elected to the Senate of the United States, and now the people are hearing from him.

Advertisement for 'The Judge's Lash' featuring a cartoon illustration of a man and a dog.