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# Social Pathology

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REVISED EDITION

# Social Pathology

## OBSTACLES TO SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

By

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PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

and

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

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# PREFACE

IN 1925 the first edition of *Social Pathology* was published under the authorship of Stuart A. Queen and Delbert M. Mann. Two features made that book distinctive: the use of case summaries of real people and the effort to emphasize sociological aspects of problem situations. The stories from real life have evidently helped students to appreciate and understand certain conditions. But no single instance can adequately represent the circumstances of all the blind, let us say, or all the unemployed. So, in nearly every chapter of the revised edition, we present two or three cases illustrating divergent aspects of some handicap. Despite our efforts to stress the sociological, the first edition was essentially eclectic, as were all other textbooks in the field. Since that time, there has been much discussion of the proper scope and method for studies of social problems by sociologists. Some of this discussion is recapitulated in Part I of this present edition.

In 1935 Messrs. Queen, Bodenhafer, and Harper produced a book, called *Social Organization and Disorganization,* based on the belief that the sociologists' chief contribution to an understanding of social problems has to do with four questions: How do social groups go to pieces? How do social institutions disintegrate? What are the effects of such social disorganization on personality? How do personal inadequacies affect the functioning of groups and institutions? It now appears that the effort to answer all four of these questions is much too large a task for a single text or a single course of study.

This present book, therefore, has a much more limited scope.

But it too will be found to cover a large area of human experience. However, in this edition of *Social Pathology*, we are dealing with only one major issue: How do various handicaps—physical, mental, economic, and other—affect the social participation of individual persons? By social participation we mean membership and roles in social groups and activities that may be described as cultural. Our central problem may be broken into three parts: Do so-called handicapped persons really take less part in "society" than persons without the same handicaps? Do they share less in social life after a handicap is imposed than before? If some handicapped persons are more isolated than others, what factors are associated with this difference? In thus developing our book about the central theme of social participation, we have sought to achieve unity and coherence in what otherwise might be a miscellaneous collection of data about various kinds of human misfortune. We hope we have produced a text with a sociological frame of reference.

Because of physical separation of the original authors of *Social Pathology*, Mr. Mann's place has been taken by Miss Gruener. In planning the new edition, Miss Gruener and Mr. Queen have collaborated very closely. Both have had a part in the writing of every chapter, but there has also been a division of labor whereby chief responsibility for chapters 5–13, 18, 21, and 22 was assumed by Miss Gruener, and the chief responsibility for chapters 1–4, 14–17, 19, 20, and 23 by Mr. Queen.

In assembling material for this book, we have drawn freely from many sources. We are indebted to numerous individuals, social agencies, and publishers. Our thanks are especially due to the following persons: Herschel Alt, F. Stuart Chapin, Orrine Zoe Conard, Seba Eldridge, Mrs. Cornelia Vandervelde Fields, Mrs. Annette Selzer Gast, Robert F. Manlove, Thelma Elizabeth Moore, Eva J. Ross, Emily Snow, Mary B. Taussig, Philip H. Vogt, Paul Wander, Maurice Wortman; to the following publishers: D. Appleton-Century Company, The University of Chicago Press,

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Protection, Worcester Children's Friend Society, National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the U.S.A., National Council of the Young Men's Christian Associations of the U.S.A.; and to the following periodicals: *American Heart Journal, American Journal of Hygiene, American Journal of Medical Sciences, American Journal of Public Health, American Journal of Sociology, American Sociological Review, Archives of Psychology, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, The Crippled Child, The Family, The Forum, Harper's Magazine, Hospital Social Service, Hygeia, Journal of the American Medical Association, Mental Hygiene, Monthly Labor Review, Psychiatric Quarterly, Psychological Clinic, Public Health Reports, School Life, Social Forces, Social Service Review, Social Work Year Book, The Survey, Teachers College Record, World Tomorrow.* We are particularly grateful to Washington University, the St. Louis Provident Association, and the St. Louis Children's Aid Society for encouraging and facilitating our work, to Pearl Garber for typing the manuscript, and to the National Youth Administration for making her services available.

Scattered through the book are the summaries of life histories. These all deal with real people but in all cases except those of Helen Keller, Booker T. Washington, Frank Hague, and Dr. Edward Trudeau, the names and other identifying data have been altered.

STUART A. QUEEN
JENNETTE R. GRUENER

*January, 1940*

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*PART I*

# THE FIELD OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

# *FOREWORD TO PART I*

*AN Arctic explorer once defined an Eskimo dog as any dog belonging to an Eskimo. So one might define a social problem as any problem discussed by a social scientist or social worker. Of course, this is really no definition at all. The use of such a term is so broad that it has no specific meaning. It is something like the term drugstore—a place where one may buy toys, radios, stationery, tobacco, liquor, patent medicines, and, perhaps, have prescriptions filled.*

*In Part I of this book, we try to set forth the nature and varieties of social problems together with some of the ways in which they may be studied. In Chapter 1, we plunge immediately into the basic questions to which answers are sought throughout our study. Do the so-called "social pathologies" really handicap human beings in their social relationships? If so, in what ways, and to what extent? In Chapters 2 and 3, we discuss the theoretical background of our more specific studies and outline the broad frame of reference into which our text is fitted.*

*In other words, Part I is written primarily for teachers. It is likely to have more meaning for students if read at the end of a course rather than at the beginning. However, each instructor will naturally want to discuss in his own way the issues raised in these three chapters. Whether and when he assigns them to his students must be an individual problem for each teacher.*

# *Chapter 1*

# SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

WE have all noticed among our acquaintances wide variations in the extent to which they take part in social life. Some are veritable "joiners" and belong to a multitude of organizations; others are content with a few group affiliations. Some "go" a great deal; others are seen only occasionally in public places. Some hold numerous offices, serve on committees, and make frequent speeches; others are inconspicuous participants in meetings and organizations. Some read many books and magazines, listen to radio broadcasts, attend lectures and concerts; others are content to sit by the fire and smoke or knit. Some engage actively in golf, tennis, swimming, and hiking; others sit in the bleachers to watch someone else perform. So, in a multitude of ways, persons differ in the character and amount of social participation.

Some of these differences appear to be matters of temperament and habit; that is, the extent of group activity often seems to accord closely with the desires of the persons involved. But in other cases, it is evident that individuals would gladly take a larger part in social life; they are prevented by circumstances beyond their control. They may be lame or hard of hearing; they may be poor or queer; they may be looked down upon as members of a despised race or class. When these and similar conditions obtain, we find ourselves in the ill-defined realm of "social problems." We are considering persons variously called "deviates," "dependents, defectives, and delinquents," "socially inadequate," and other names

which indicate their nonconformity to the ways of life approved by their community or culture group. These people are "news." For their benefit, charitable organizations are set up and financial campaigns are conducted. For their control, laws are passed and officials are appointed.

This brief discussion opens up a host of issues which might be studied to advantage. But of them all, we shall concern ourselves primarily with these questions: Do these persons participate more or less in social groups than persons without their "handicaps"? Do they take more or less advantage of cultural opportunities?

To be more specific, and to make clearer what we mean by social participation, we present the story of two brothers, poverty-stricken, mentally deficient, criminal, and very limited in the range of their social contacts.

### Job and Matthew Calkins [1]

The ancestors of Job and Matthew Calkins, known in the region as of "mountaineer" stock, have for more than five generations lived as squatters in the Ramapo Hills of New York State. The men are characterized as rugged, powerful of physique, and generally free from disease. Their habitations were crude shacks in remote mountain pockets, and their chief occupations chopping cordwood, cutting timber and bark, weaving baskets, and carving scoops, ladles, and similar domestic implements out of hardwood obtained in the forest. When the heavy timber was gone, and the brickyards which they had been supplying with fuel began to substitute oil for wood, and the village store no longer traded provisions for their baskets and trays, their principal source of livelihood failed and, idleness and strong drink supervening, induced widespread degeneracy among them. The farmers of the region made and fermented "applejack" in large quantities and dispensed it with calculated liberality among their helpers at harvesttime. Drunkenness became endemic among the Calkins', who have been notorious for their intemperance ever since. . . .

[1] Excerpts from a social history prepared by Paul Wander, formerly social worker in the psychiatric clinic at Sing Sing Prison. The men described in the record had been convicted of murder.

The mother, on account of her own obvious limitations, has exerted only the most feeble influence on the intellectual and moral development of Job and Matthew. Indeed, by virtue of her ignorance and superstition, she has been at least indirectly responsible for their highly irregular school attendance, their social isolation and retardation, their industrial inefficiency, and their moral immaturity. The same general indictment applies to the father as well, whose gentle, easygoing manner and lack of firmness disqualified him for the exercise of necessary parental authority. . . .

Job is described as tractable, docile, and easily governed, while Matthew was inclined to rough fun, "cutting up," and lawlessness, especially outside the home. Neither played much, Job less than Matthew; nor did they mingle freely with other boys of the neighborhood. Job was quiet and somewhat seclusive, Matthew more lively and sociable. They found few companions among their schoolfellows and seem to have made no fast friends. Being required by their parents to work from early childhood, they had little time for play, and what they had they spent at home. Among strangers, especially among those of higher social and mental grade, they have always felt ill at ease and awkward, and apparently for this reason Matthew preferred the uncritical society of children younger than himself.

Aside from being backward and bashful in manner, Job and Matthew were unattractive to other children by reason of their neglected, if not disreputable, appearance and uncouth speech, and were avoided and looked down upon by most of their schoolmates and neighbors as belonging to the despised "mountaineer" folk. Matthew, in particular, felt the force of this ostracism at school, and neither he nor Job was admitted to any genuine association with children from families of more progressive standards of living and culture. As a natural consequence, they turned for the satisfaction of their sociability needs to their own poor kinship circle.

The family has never known a fixed abode. For generations the ancestors, including the parents of Job and Matthew, squatted in mountain pockets until dislodged by the passing of the woodland into private ownership in the form of large estates. Within the lifetime of Job and Matthew alone, the family has migrated some twenty times. . . .

Their usual habitations were rough shacks, sometimes constructed by themselves, and providing most unsanitary and unwholesomely congested quarters. Except in one or two instances, where the family tem-

porarily occupied as many as three or four rooms, they have never enjoyed decent privacy or essential sanitary and household conveniences. Bathtubs, water closets, and running water have been practically unknown luxuries at all times. All water has to be carried, sometimes long distances. Toilet facilities are most primitive. . . .

Even though the family denies having suffered acute want for any length of time, they admitted that "it took all they could earn to keep alive," and there is abundant evidence pointing to a chronic state of want, a wretched hand-to-mouth existence, a constant tendency to undernutrition, and periodic semistarvation. And this abiding condition of poverty may be set down fairly as due less to their industrial inefficiency, and correspondingly low wages as such, than to their prevailing shiftlessness and improvident habits, and their lack of economic intelligence.

On several occasions, under severe economic stress, the family or some of its members have so far overcome their native inertia as to migrate in search of an improved livelihood. Usually, they have followed the invitation of relatives established elsewhere, who have reported better wages or opportunities of employment. In several instances, on the other hand, notably in recent years, they have been tided over periods of special hardship by securing credit from their employers. Any other available sources of relief, both private and public, have been utilized, though not until absolutely necessary to maintain existence. . . .

The brothers have found their pleasures chiefly and almost solely in hunting, fishing, and strong drink, the last of these seeming to yield them the keenest satisfaction of all. They derived genuine enjoyment out of getting thoroughly "soused," and called this experience "having a good time." They rarely applied themselves to hunting or fishing with sufficient zest to depend upon it largely for food; they seemed to lack the necessary power of concentration even in this direction of their primary play interests. Incidental to their quest for game or liquor, they also exhibited a taste for roving, but they seldom absented themselves from home for more than a day or two at a time. A predilection for "loafing" is also to be noted. Job and Matthew and their older brothers were practically confined for their sociable pleasures to loitering and drinking with older idle men and boys. For the sake of this diversion, they would often leave their work in the middle of the week and, on the pretext of going hunting or of buying groceries in the village, would

spend their money on beer and whisky, usually returning home drunk. They consistently refrained from attending any parties, dances, picnics, or neighborhood gatherings of any kind; partly, no doubt, owing to their lack of presentable clothing, but in part also because of their inherent lack of sociability and their general unpopularity. They are said to feel no desire for such forms of recreation—or for motion pictures, of which they have seen but few—doubtless a case of sour grapes. They know nothing of magazines and newspapers. The only trace of the aesthetic appears in Matthew, who is credited with a fondness for making music on a harmonica. . . .

The family standards and morals in sex matters are so lax that it is difficult to speak of specific acts of immorality. The men, i. e., the young men of the family, are said to cohabit, largely regardless of marriage ties, with women of their own blood, and sometimes with girls as young as 13 and 14. When a child is born, they may arrange either voluntarily or by order of court to cover up the illegitimacy by formal marriage, and cases of bigamy are not unknown. The women, especially the feeble-minded ones, are quite as loose as the men. The presence of those of their children who were born out of wedlock cannot but affect unhappily the moral tone of their home life, although there seems to be no clear consciousness of wrong on the part of the parent. Little definite information can be gained regarding the sex life or habits of Job and Matthew, who seem on the whole to have had little contact of any sort with women not of their own kin.

The scholastic career of Job and Matthew was irregular and abortive. Job seems to have attended school between the ages of 12 and 14 —somewhat over two terms. Matthew entered at 8 or 10 and continued with numerous interruptions up to 16. . . .

Although Job's presence in school was relatively brief, it was sufficient to demonstrate his inability to progress in the primary grades; he has never learned to read or write even his own name. Both are said to have forgotten from one day to the next what they were taught in school. They learned to copy the letters of the alphabet, but not to read them when written, or to use them independently in words. Matthew likes to scrawl and draw, and is considered something of a penman. He reached the third reader by the age of 16, while Job is believed by some to have attained to the second reader. Needless to say, neither betrayed any positive interest or aptitude in school except as noted above

in the case of Matthew. As to their mathematical ability, one saloon-keeper affirms that they are apt to accept whatever change is returned to them without verifying the amount. It appears that their teachers, while in general kindly and encouraging with reference to the material and social handicaps of Job and Matthew, were inclined to be apathetic toward their intellectual difficulties, probably from a recognition of these as insuperable defects. . . .

Job and Matthew have never acquired any specialized occupation or industrial proficiency, but may be classed as agricultural laborers, most of their wage-earning lives having been spent on the farm. They began to work casually for pay as quite young children; "almost as early as they could walk," they were employed picking strawberries in the field at 25 cents and up per day. But not until the age of 10 or 12 did they work with any regularity for wages. Matthew worked considerably while still at school, assisting his elders on the farm. Beginning with 50 cents as a day's wage, they advanced by the time of reaching maturity to $1.50 per day, or nearly the current rate of agricultural wages. Now and then they have earned as high as $2.00 and $2.25 per day while employed on the state highway, erecting fences for the railroad, shoveling coal from cars, etc. But not being adapted to such labor, on account of its orderly and continuous character, they rarely followed it for more than a few days together. They either lost such employment through drunkenness and irregularity in attendance, or were discharged on being discovered soldiering, or abandoned it as too exacting. They have held no industrial employment long enough to gain skill or advancement in it or to accumulate savings. The more primitive routine of farm and orchard, including as winter chores woodchopping, trimming trees, clearing brush, marked the level of their industrial capacity. . . .

Such minor offenses against law and public peace as would constitute the criminal record of Job and Matthew seem in almost every case complicated, if not induced, by intoxication. While exceedingly undignified, their conduct in the village was for the most part sufficiently peaceful not to land them in the local jail for disorderly conduct. The Justice of the Peace of S—— admits having heard complaints about them, but remembers no arrest on this score having been made. The attorney, however, who conducted Job's defense in the murder trial, recalls one instance of Job's being locked up overnight for boisterous

conduct while drunk. Outside the village, at any rate, they were known to have quarreled among themselves, while intoxicated, and once fought a bloody battle with rocks on the public highway. When alone among strangers, they were inclined to be timid and gentle, but in the company of their kind, and especially after drinking, would tend to grow bold, aggressive, and lawless in their relations to outsiders, ready to annoy neighbors of like social station or even to do them injury.

In the foregoing account, we have described two men whose social participation was relatively limited. Outside their own kinsmen, they had few acquaintances and fewer friends. They engaged in few group activities such as parties, picnics, and games. They spent little time in school. Because they were practically illiterate, they did no reading. They never went to the theater or to church. Even the movies were outside their experience. They felt shy in the presence of strangers. Other people regarded them with disgust and annoyance or with pity and condescension. Their few social contacts were with relatives, employers, and tradesmen. Their pleasures were of a solitary sort—hunting, fishing, drinking. The social isolation of these men was obvious. But there are several questions about them which we cannot answer. Since we have not yet a norm or average of social participation, we cannot express quantitatively the degree of isolation or participation. Also, we are unable to say either that the isolation produced the poverty and delinquency or that the poverty and delinquency helped to produce the isolation. Furthermore, we may not infer from a single case that social isolation is regularly associated with poverty and delinquency.

*Methods of Studying Social Participation.* There are several ways in which we may undertake to answer these questions and more general ones which they suggest. (*a*) First of all, to get a norm of social participation, we need to study a large random sample of the population. In this, we would attempt to measure

tacts through education, reading, radio, concerts, and the like, and cultural activities such as singing, playing games, writing, and using various vocational and avocational skills.

(*b*) To determine what factors are associated with the degree of social participation, we might select two samples: one of persons known to be active in social groups and to possess a wealth of cultural experience, the other of persons whose range of contacts is known to be narrow and cultural experience meager. Both samples would be studied with reference to a large number of factors —physical, mental, economic, and other—which are suspected of having a significant relationship to social participation. Correlations might be run between indexes of group membership, cultural contacts, and cultural activities and such physical factors as soundness or impairment of various limbs and organs, such psychological factors as intelligence quotient and emotional stability, such economic factors as occupation and income, such cultural factors as class, ethnic group, and religion. Among the factors negatively or positively correlated with social participation would doubtless be some that are regarded as handicaps or "pathological." Thus, we would expect to find a negative correlation between the degree of social participation and blindness, feeble-mindedness, unemployment, and race prejudice; a positive correlation with income, schooling, and prestige.

(*c*) A third type of research project would involve the point-by-point comparison of people presenting a given physical, mental, economic, or other characteristic with people not having that trait. Thus, a large number of blind persons would be compared with a corresponding number of seeing persons similarly distributed as to sex, age, ethnic group, general health, intelligence, and economic status. A sample of unemployed persons would be compared with a control group of employed persons paired so as to eliminate (or at least reduce) the possible influence of occupation, schooling, religion, age, and physical health.

(*d*) Similar to the kind of study just outlined would be the examination of persons before and after experiencing such crises as amputation, loss of sight, discharge from job, conviction of crime, or loss of a loved one. Great care would, of course, have to be taken to note other changes that may have taken place in their life organization, to guard against attributing too much significance to single events.

(*e*) Finally, we might study two samples of persons having a given handicap: one made up of persons with high indexes of social participation, the other made up of persons with low indexes. By a comprehensive study of their traits and experiences, we might discover whether the supposed handicap is actually more or less significant than some other factor previously neglected. For example, among the crippled, we know that some belong to numerous groups, have many friends, enjoy a wide range of cultural contacts, and engage in many cultural activities. But other cripples know few people, go out very little, take little advantage of books, magazines, and radio, play few games, and acquire few skills. We need to know how many of each type there may be, and with what other factors their social participation or isolation may be associated.

Large-scale studies of the types we have suggested seem not to have been made, but there are numerous projects, more limited in scope, concerning which we have some information. References will be made in subsequent chapters, especially to studies of the third type. Whenever data are available, we shall report on relevant studies of the fourth and fifth types. But before proceeding with the comparative studies of presumably handicapped and nonhandicapped persons, we shall describe briefly a few general studies of social participation and associated factors. The ones chosen are intended to illustrate some of the possibilities in this field.

*Previous Studies of Social Participation.* Some years ago, Hypes

made a study of social participation in a small Connecticut town.[2] He paid special attention to membership in primary groups and attendance at their meetings. He measured participation first in terms of "individual hours of attendance," by which he meant simply the clock hours of time a person spent in a given activity. Then he computed a "family-participation index" by adding the individual hours and dividing by the number of members of a family eligible to participate in each specified activity. This was followed by a search for the factors associated with high or low scores. Among these, he found ethnic groups important—"old Americans" ranking high and Germans low, Poles and Jews occupying intermediate positions. He found that persons and families active in certain groups were also active in several others. Participation in town meetings, recreational organizations, economic groups, church, and neighborhood visiting was highly intercorrelated. Age and sex were found to be significant not only with reference to the total amount of group participation, but also with reference to the kinds of groups in which persons were active. Surprisingly, length of residence and economic status (measured by mortgages) showed practically no relationship to group activity. Improved means of communication (telephone, automobile, improved road) seemed to reduce rather than to increase participation in primary groups. Perhaps they facilitated membership and attendance in secondary groups and those outside the community. This study shed little light on social problems as they are ordinarily conceived, but it represents a procedure which might well be utilized in their study.

More recently, Geddes[3] made a study of social participation in a rural community of Utah. First he compiled a list of "agency offerings," i. e., meetings and activities provided by various or-

[2] J. L. Hypes, *Social Participation in a Rural New England Town* (1927).

[3] Joseph A. Geddes, *Farm versus Village Living in Utah* (Utah Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 269 [1936]).

ganized groups, the number of each type of gathering, the average length of each, and the total number of hours each consumed in the course of a year. Then he asked each resident to report the number of times during a year that he participated in each type of activity. From this information, he computed for each person and family the number of hours devoted to each activity, the total hours of such social participation during the year, and the ratio of actual to possible participation. Finally, he classified the population as to age, sex, residence, education, and occupation (farm and nonfarm), to see if he could discover any relation between these factors and the amount of participation in organized groups.

Some of Geddes' findings were these: farm families living on the edge of town took a larger part in local community functions than did families of any other sort. Next in order of relative participation came families living in the village but having farms some distance out. After these came the nonfarm families living in the village. Least active of all were the families living on farms outside the village. In such a situation as this, it appears that distance between workplace (farm) and meeting place (village center) is a significant factor in determining the part taken in organized group activities.

As to age and sex, Geddes found young people more active than smaller children and both taking a larger part than their parents in local community functions. In edge-of-town farm families, the men reported more social participation than their wives, but in the other three types of families, the women were more active than their husbands. In general, education appeared to further attendance at community functions, although college-trained persons ranked below those who had only been to high school.

In addition to strictly local gatherings, Geddes considered those of a semilocal character, such as farm bureau, and those outside the community. The results with reference to these were somewhat different, but the method of study was the same. Moreover, when

all kinds of functions were considered, the people living on scattered farms were found to be less active in group affairs than people who lived in or near the village. Thus there is indicated a negative relationship between physical isolation and social participation. In so far as other studies display similar results, we have clues to an understanding of an important group of social problems in rural America: problems involving loneliness, individualism, suspicion of strangers, dissatisfaction with farm life.

Neither Hypes nor Geddes utilized school attendance and advancement as measures of social participation. But a 1938 study in a rural Missouri county [4] was based on the assumption that school attendance is both an important kind of social participation and an aid to further activity in social groups; in other words, that school children are actually sharing in group life and cultural activities while they are equipping themselves for a larger part in the affairs of family, neighborhood, community, state, church, lodge, and many other groups.

This study made by Mary Taussig grew out of another made by the National Child Labor Committee. The working hypothesis of the Committee was that tiff (barytes) mining encouraged child labor, which in turn was responsible for illiteracy, poor health, poverty, and other conditions apparent in the region. Instead of accepting this hypothesis, Miss Taussig formulated the problem: What factors are associated with poor school attendance in this county? From the school census and from the teachers' records, she selected the 50 most regular attendants and 50 children who did not go to school at all or were least regular in attendance during 1936–1937. Then, with a schedule of factors that were suspected of being significant, she visited the homes of these 100 children.

The data indicated that many different factors were associated

[4] Mary B. Taussig, "School Attendance in Washington County, Missouri" (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1938).

with poor school attendance. First was age: the most regular attendants being from 9 to 13 years old; irregularity being marked among the smaller children and the older ones. As to sex, boys attended less regularly than girls. Broken homes were more than twice as numerous among the irregular as among the regular attendants. Education of parents showed a median of second grade for the irregular and sixth grade for the regular attendants. Mobility appeared to be significant: the families of irregular attendants had moved much more frequently than had the families of regular attendants. Families with church affilation, either Protestant or Catholic, sent their children more regularly to school than did those without church affiliation. In the homes of regular attendants were found newspapers, magazines, books, and musical instruments much more frequently than in the homes of irregular attendants. Sickness, while not reported accurately, appeared to be much more common among those who were out of school a great deal. More important than most of the other differences was that in distance and kind of road between home and school. Those who went most regularly to school traveled two fifths of the way on gravel roads and most of the remainder on maintained dirt roads, whereas the irregular attendants traveled nearly half of the way on paths through the woods and over the hills but very little on gravel roads. Two fifths of the regular attendants, but none of the irregulars, lived in villages. Five times as many irregular attendants as regular attendants had to cross unbridged creeks. The fathers of the children who were out of school the most were frequently tiff miners, with low incomes, rarely owning their homes, which were often log cabins or small frame shacks; whereas the fathers of children who went regularly to school had a variety of occupations (only one fifth were tiff miners), with higher incomes, half of them owning their homes, one third of which were two-story frame houses.

Whether the same results would be displayed by another sam-

ple, we are not sure, but in this group of families, economic status, schooling of parents, church affiliation, distance, and character of roads are some of the factors associated with children's school attendance, which in turn seems to be a useful index of social participation. But more important than the hypotheses supported by this limited study are the methods employed. We refer particularly to the study not merely of a so-called "problem group," but also of a "control group," and the search for any factors which may be significant rather than limiting the investigation to one or a small number in which the student might happen to be interested.

An Illinois study [5] several years ago dealt with participation in organized groups, not merely with reference to membership and attendance, but also with reference to payment of dues, taking part in programs, service on committees and boards, and holding office. This effort to break the general concept of group participation into constituent elements which may be measured seems to us very significant. Hence, we are not disturbed by the limited size of the sample—less than 1,000 persons. The findings may or may not be representative; they at least indicate types of relationships which are worth studying. Lindstrom found that nearly 70 per cent of farm laborers did not participate at all in any organized group, while such nonparticipation characterized only 43 per cent of retired owners, 31 per cent of tenants unrelated to owners, 25 per cent of full operator-owners, and 14 per cent of part owners. In other words, this study indicated a positive relationship between economic status and membership in formal social groups. Turning from mere membership to more significant forms of participation, persons of different status showed striking differences in their relative activity. Farm laborers rarely held office, served on committees, took part in programs, or even paid dues. Tenants related to

[5] D. E. Lindstrom, *Forces Affecting Participation of Farm People in Rural Organization* (University of Illinois, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 423 [1936]).

owners ranked highest in all these respects. Part owners ranked second highest in all respects except service on committees. In addition to economic status, formal education showed a high degree of association with each form of group participation. Persons with less than eighth-grade schooling appeared least often as officers, committee members, dues payers, and participants in programs; more often than any other type, they took no part in organized group activities. Persons who had graduated from high school appeared most frequently as officers, committee members, dues payers, and participants in programs; less often than any other type did they abstain wholly from organized group activities. Incidentally, in so far as this study is representative, it supports the assumption underlying Miss Taussig's study. Other factors which Lindstrom found related to group activity were sex, age, and trips away from home. This last is a suggestive item, but unfortunately Lindstrom's data are not presented in a form relevant to the present purpose.

We conclude this review by reference to a project which combined case study and statistical methods.[6] For the purposes of this study, social participation included attendance at meetings, trips to town for trading, visits to homes of other families, visits of others to the home reported, movies, athletic contests, funerals, sales, and other gatherings, but not school attendance. Each visit, gathering attended, or trip taken counted as one, no attempt being made to measure the time involved. Total scores were computed for each individual and average scores for each family. Factors associated with social-participation scores included economic status (size of farm, gross cash income, expenditure for family living and for recreation), stability of residence (years at present address), books and magazines in the home, and use of public library. To make more vivid the difference between a family with

[6] Orrine Zoe Conard, "Social Participation of the Members of Selected Farm Households" (unpublished master's thesis, University of Missouri, 1938).

a high score and one with a low score, we shall summarize the descriptions of two such groups.

The family with a high score consisted of man and woman aged about 40, boy 14, and girl 8. The man had an eighth-grade education; his wife had been to college two years. They owned a 120-acre farm and rented 180 acres in addition. The gross cash income for 1937 was $2,600; farm expenditures were $1,400, and family expenses were $600. These people lived five miles from a town of 2,300, their chief trading center. Their house was a one-story, five-room, frame structure over thirty years old. It had no plumbing fixtures. Lighting was by means of kerosene lamps, cooking and heating by wood and kerosene stoves. There was a telephone, a phonograph, and a piano, but no radio. There were fifty books, one local weekly paper, two other weeklies, one daily, and five magazines. Bulletins and pamphlets were received from the state college of agriculture, two magazines were borrowed from a neighborhood club, but no use was made of the public library in town. The man was accustomed to make four trips a month to town, and his wife three, for trading. The family attended church weekly, but seldom went to town for other meetings or for movies. Their "social" activities were largely confined to the immediate neighborhood. The average score of social participation for members of this family was 167.

In contrast, we present a family of farm tenants occupying a 25-acre farm a half mile from a small town. They operated a small dairy and delivered the milk in town. The gross cash income was $1,460; farm expenses were $800, and $400 was spent for family living. The make-up of the family was almost identical with the one just described. Man and wife were in their early forties, children were 15 and 9. They lived in a six-room, two-story house that was seventy years old. There were electric lights, refrigerator, washer, and iron. There was no plumbing, water being carried from a shallow well. The family owned a radio and

fifty books. During the year they borrowed ten books from neighbors, but made no use of the public library. They took one daily paper and two magazines. The family had moved four times during the past sixteen years. Social contacts—outside of school, selling milk, and shopping—were practically restricted to movies and Sunday school for the two girls, and visiting for their mother. The average score for members of this family was 46, about one fourth the score for the first family.

The five studies discussed in this section are presented in order to illustrate some of the activities that are involved in social participation, to indicate some methods of research, and to suggest possible uses of this point of view in the study of social problems.

*Summary and Forecast.* In this chapter, we have sought to demonstrate the possibility and the usefulness of studying social problems in terms of the social participation of the persons involved. In the body of the book which follows, we shall utilize this approach so far as existing techniques and available data permit. But we are handicapped in several ways. First, there is no inclusive, generally accepted scale of social participation. Chapin has devised a scale to measure participation in groups "organized as more or less independent entities," that is, interest groups that are somewhat institutionalized. He has used it enough to indicate that it is a reliable instrument in the hands of reasonably competent persons. He has demonstrated that it is correlated with education ($r = +.54$), occupation ($r = +.63$), income ($r = +.52$), and social status ($r = +.62$).[7] Second, the scales which are available have not been tried out on sufficiently large or varied samples to yield norms in terms of average-participation scores. Chapin has worked out tentative norms for several types of families in Minneapolis, but wider application is needed before we can accept averages as dependable. Third, existing scales have not been utilized in the study

[7] F. Stuart Chapin, "Social Participation Scale, 1937" (University of Minnesota Press).

of the supposed handicaps which we are going to consider in this book. For these reasons, we shall have to depend chiefly on studies of small samples, on indirect evidence, and on descriptive rather than quantitative data. These are serious limitations on the study of handicaps to social participation. But in the present stage of sociology's development, they are inevitable.

What we shall actually do in the chapters to come is this: we shall review a variety of circumstances that are supposed to handicap persons for social participation. We shall describe selected traits and events, tell what is known about the frequency of their occurrence, and how they come into existence (causation). Then we shall present such evidence as we can discover to bear upon these questions: Do persons possessing a given trait (e. g., blindness) rank higher or lower than persons without the trait, in the amount of social participation? Do persons who have experienced a given crisis (e. g., loss of job) rank higher or lower in social participation than persons who have not had this experience? If some persons possessing a given trait or having experienced a given crisis differ markedly in the degree of social participation from other persons with the same trait or experience, what are the concomitant variables? It would be very convenient if we had ready-made norms (averages) of social participation, but since none have been computed, we shall have to proceed as just indicated.

Since studies of the types suggested are obviously in early stages of their development, we shall outline some of the items that may well be included in schedules for the measurement of social participation. But until there has been more experimentation, we will not be warranted in proposing a complete instrument for this purpose. Some of the items that we deem worthy of incorporation in studies of social participation have been suggested by projects described in this chapter. Others are derived from a variety of sources. We have not devised a system of scoring, but list here-

with some of the items which, in our judgment, should be utilized in computing an index of social participation.

A. Group participation
   1. Family
      *a.* Marriage (for adults)
      *b.* Activities shared with spouse, parents, children, kinsmen
         (1) Varieties of activities
         (2) Time spent in shared activities
   2. Neighborhood
      *a.* Visiting
      *b.* Exchange of articles
      *c.* Exchange of services
      *d.* Joint activities
   3. Interest groups: small, informal
      *a.* Number of groups
      *b.* Kinds of groups
      *c.* Time per week or month
   4. Interest groups: organized
      *a.* Membership, number of groups
      *b.* Meetings attended
      *c.* Part in program
      *d.* Payment of dues
      *e.* Service on committees
      *f.* Holding office
   5. School
      *a.* Children and youths
         (1) Attendance—days per year
         (2) Advancement or retardation
      *b.* Adults
         (1) Total schooling in years
         (2) Grade achieved before leaving school
   6. Work
      *a.* Days employed per year
      *b.* Income per month
      *c.* Personal contacts involved
   7. Government
      *a.* Voting—number times voted, not voted, during two years

B. Cultural participation
   1. Reading
      *a.* Daily papers—number read regularly
      *b.* Parts of the papers read regularly
      *c.* Weekly papers—number read regularly
      *d.* Magazines—number read regularly
      *e.* Kinds of magazines read regularly, e. g., five-cent weeklies, monthly reviews, women's, fine arts, confessional, detective
      *f.* Books—number read per month or per year
      *g.* Kinds of books, e. g., fiction, history, poetry, science, religion
      *h.* Hours spent in reading per month
   2. Dramatic and musical events
      *a.* Movies—number attended per month
      *b.* Stage shows—number attended per month
      *c.* Musical events—number attended per month
   3. Educational and religious events
      *a.* Religious services—number attended per month
      *b.* Lectures—number attended per month
      *c.* Classes—number attended per month
   4. Radio
      *a.* Hours of listening per week or month
      *b.* Kinds of programs heard, e. g., music, drama, educational, religious
   5. Expressional activities
      *a.* Music
         (1) Play musical instrument?—hours per month
         (2) Sing?—hours per month
      *b.* Dramatics—hours per month
      *c.* Sports—hours per month
      *d.* "Social events"—hours per month

C. Personal acceptance (attitudes toward immediate associates and of them toward him)
   *a.* Hostility—anger, resentment
   *b.* Avoidance—disgust, annoyance, fear
   *c.* Tolerance—pity, condescension, charity
   *d.* Acceptance—liking, comradeship, approval

If a system of scoring these items had been standardized, and if the data had been assembled for large numbers of persons of the types that concern us, a very different book could have been written. As it is, we have made such use of this outline as the circumstances permitted. To those schooled in scientific methods, our data will seem very inadequate. But to those who have seen the study of social problems develop out of casual impressions and moral exhortation, this may represent one step toward systematic, objective research and reporting. At least, our effort has been directed toward summarizing the data now available for analysis of the relationships between various so-called handicaps and social participation.

## Suggested Readings

Chapin, F. Stuart, "Design for Social Experiments," *American Sociological Review*, 3 (1938), 786–800. Description of three studies involving control groups.

Dawson, Carl A., and Gettys, W. E., *An Introduction to Sociology*. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1935. Chapter 21, "The Natural History of the Person," deals with factors which affect one's role in social groups.

Hawthorn, H. B., *The Sociology of Rural Life*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1926. Chapter 4, "Measurement of Socialization," outlines a method of studying social participation quantitatively.

Park, Robert E., and Burgess, Ernest W., *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1924. Chapter 4, "Isolation," and Chapter 5, "Social Contacts," contain papers on social participation and its absence.

Queen, Stuart A., Bodenhafer, W. B., and Harper, E. B., *Social Organization and Disorganization*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1935. Part IV, "Personalities," considers various factors which determine the part one plays in social life.

Reuter, E. B., and Hart, C. W., *Introduction to Sociology*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1933. Chapter 8, "Isolation,"

and Chapter 9, "Social Contacts," present a good theoretical discussion of social participation.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Secure copies of Chapin's "Social Participation Scale, 1937," which may be purchased from the University of Minnesota Press at low cost. Have it filled out by each member of the class, and score and tabulate the results.

2. Have the class devise a schedule for studying social participation. Discuss briefly and simply the issues involved in the choice of long and short schedules. Discuss the problems of how to determine the validity and the reliability of a schedule. In general, introduce students to the importance of statistical studies. Show how interesting it may be to collect and manipulate statistical data. Do not exaggerate the ease of such work, but seek to overcome the all-too-common fear of statistics.

3. Give the class a modified social-distance test (see E. S. Bogardus, "Measuring Social Distance," *Journal of Applied Sociology*, 9: 299–308; or George Lundberg, *Social Research*, pp. 222–3; or Pauline V. Young, *Scientific Social Surveys and Research*, pp. 364–5), substituting various types of handicapped persons for ethnic groups. Also include, for comparison, athletes, teachers, "average" students. Plan to repeat this test at the end of the course to see what changes, if any, will have taken place in student attitudes.

4. Have each student bring in written descriptions of two persons: one recognized as socially very active, the other considered rather isolated. The individuals described should be real persons actually known to the students. However, their identification need not, and perhaps should not, be revealed. Select significant features from these descriptions and present them to the class, commenting on the differences between the relatively active and the relatively isolated persons. Discuss the value of such case stories. Point out their limitations, especially as these pertain to accuracy, completeness, and representativeness. Discuss the possible relations between case studies and statistical studies.

5. Let each member of the class view retrospectively his own childhood and adolescence and recall for each period the nature of his (*a*) role in the family group, and (*b*) participation in school and play groups. What factors influenced his status in the group? For what

reason did he not participate in certain groups of which he might have wished to be a member?

6. Write an analysis of, or discuss in class, similarities and differences of the individual's role in various groups as presented in this text and in the suggested readings from Dawson and Gettys, Park and Burgess, Queen, Bodenhafer, and Harper, and Reuter and Hart.

# *Chapter 2*

# PROBLEMS OF STUDYING AND TEACHING SOCIAL PROBLEMS

IN the first chapter, we outlined a program for studying handicaps to social participation. Needless to say, this is not the usual approach to persons who are different from the general run of folks. Perhaps the first thing that attracts attention is the sheer fact of difference. Next, it may be noted that they are burdens to someone else. Perhaps they are pitied and the public is urged to do something on their behalf. Perhaps they are considered dangerous and we are told that "there ought to be a law." Some people are concerned about their heredity, some about their health, some about their intelligence, some about their emotions, some about their income, and some about their morals. All these points of view and many others are to be found in the literature of social problems. Because our own discussion is at once related to these and different from them, it seems wise to turn aside, in this and the succeeding chapter, to review various conceptions of social problems and various approaches to their solution. We hope that in so doing we may clarify our own position and make plain to the reader the reasons for our particular approach and method.

*What is a Social Problem?* To some people, social problems have to do with the folks who are generally considered burdens or nuisances by the groups to which they belong. From this standpoint *the* social problem is what to do about "dependents, defectives, and delinquents." On the surface, this seems to be the clear-cut statement of a question to which it should be possible to find a definite an-

swer. But when we delve a little deeper, we become confused. Who is dependent anyway? Are small children and unemployed adults, old people and habitual beggars dependent in the same sense? Apparently not. It is taken for granted in our culture that small children must be supported and disciplined by their parents. It used to be assumed that old folks would be cared for by their children. If these things are expected, and if most people do what they are supposed to, then perhaps we may say there is no social problem created by the presence of these persons. But if some parents do not feed and control their children, if some grown children do not look out for their aged parents, then we may say we are confronted with a social problem. From this point of view, it is not being immature or infirm that constitutes a social problem, but failing to conform to the folkways and mores. The matter, however, is more complex than that. Suppose the children in question have no parents, or the old folks have no children. No one is failing to perform his duty, but some members of the community are in an unusual situation. They are probably *felt* to be a burden because their care falls on someone who had not expected to provide it, or upon the group as a whole. But suppose the group has had such folks on its hands before and has worked out some scheme for dealing with them—orphan asylums and homes for the aged, for example. May we now say that dependency is not a social problem? The folkways and mores are apparently adequate for the situation. The support of orphans and certain old people is accepted by the community, and the method of providing for them is also agreed upon. The only questions that remain above the horizon pertain to details of administration.

Let us see how the situation differs in the case of the unemployed. Until recently, most of our people lived on farms. When their numbers increased or their crops failed, they could move on to new land farther west. Every able-bodied adult was expected to work, and the great majority did. But there were some indolent

fellows and gossiping women. There arose a question of what to do with them. Wherever there was an accepted program, such as whipping or expulsion, and it worked, it might be said that there was no unemployment problem. But with the growth of factories and cities came widespread irregularity of work and dependence on others for the opportunity to earn a living. Whipping could not make men work when there were no jobs, and sending them farther on accomplished little after the free land was gone. If nothing were done for them, they might take to rioting or even start a revolution. Besides, employers might need them later on. So they were given food and shelter of sorts. For the most part, kindhearted folk gave to the needy unemployed without much thought of cause or consequence. But as depressions recurred and the numbers of destitute persons increased, the matter was taken more seriously. Relief societies were organized and applications were investigated. Communities began to assume some responsibility for the jobless. But fear arose in some quarters that the unemployed might get used to receiving something for nothing and like it. Then they might be unwilling to work when business improved. So the citizens were puzzled. They were faced with a real issue. It was a social problem in several different senses. First of all, those who are supposed to be experts in such matters, that is, economists, sociologists, and the like, had found no solution. In the second place, people generally were quite divided in their opinions and feelings. Finally, there was a wide gap between the new urban industrialism and the old pioneer code of personal responsibility—a cultural lag.

It is alleged that in Nazi Germany there is no problem of unemployment. Apparently, the able-bodied who are not otherwise engaged are in the army or in concentration camps. If the German people are really agreed upon this program, there is no problem of divided public opinion. If the spirit of totalitarianism has displaced the spirit of individualism to correspond with the visible

reorganization of the Reich, then there is no cultural lag. Of course, these assumptions may not accord with the facts; in that event, the conclusions are also invalid. However, it is possible to conceive a situation in which there might be unemployment without a social problem. Let us suppose that imperfections of the labor market are taken for granted and that systematic provision is made for those who are competent to work but for whom no employment is available. If this program is generally accepted, then the only questions that remain pertain to details of administration.

We seem to have agreed that orphans, old folks, and unemployed adults do not necessarily present social problems. If they are cared for in whatever fashion is approved at a given time and place, there is apparently no conflict and no cultural lag. The same thing can be shown to be true of mendicants. When individuals beg on street corners or from door to door, they may become dreadful nuisances. But if other people willingly drop coins in their hats or serve them meals, what is the social problem? Especially if the givers achieve personal satisfaction or ecclesiastical approval for their kind deeds, wherein lies any difficulty? Everyone is happy: the beggar has something to eat, and the donor has a blessing. But if beggars become numerous and demanding, so that householders give to them from a sense of fear, the situation is different. Citizens become worried; their security is threatened. So they demand the suppression of begging; harsh laws are passed. Some of the mendicants are whipped or jailed or driven out of town. But always there are some kind people who continue to give food and money to the rascals. They may be more fearful than the rest; they may be more sympathetic; or they may be unwilling to forgo the religious merit of almsgiving. Thus the situation is complicated. Begging has become a nuisance, but some folks do not want it abolished. In fact, the same individuals may be torn between a desire to be rid of the beggars' importunity and a desire to be charitable. They seem to want mutually incompatible things

—heavenly credit and earthly security, an emotional outlet and freedom from annoyance. Here we have a real social problem: the old code of behavior that worked when there were only a few harmless beggars is inadequate for dealing with many "sturdy rogues"; citizens disagree as to policy; individual persons suffer mental conflicts.

We have now considered a number of situations in which there are clearly social problems, some in which there appear to be none, and others about which we are in doubt. The social problems, if such they be, present three different aspects or types. Sometimes they are questions of technical detail, sometimes of broad social policy, and sometimes of fundamental right and wrong. In all three forms, they are practical issues confronting real people directly and personally. Later we shall see that the same matters may be regarded more abstractly by investigators who are interested in general principles rather than in particular situations. In this form, social problems become sociological (and other scientific) problems.

*Technical and Administrative Problems.* In the preceding section, we probably left the impression that when the only questions are those of administrative details there is really no social problem. We need now to correct or qualify that notion. So long as there is any doubt regarding the procedure to be followed by a number of people and the relationships which are to be maintained or developed, there is some kind of social problem. But there is an important difference between questions of administration and questions of policy. When the issue is "what shall be done," it is policy that must be determined. When the issue is "how," it is a matter of administration. This represents a difference between ends and means, between general programs and technical details. The very posing of an administrative problem assumes that there is some agreement about policy. The solving of an administrative problem is a task primarily for technicians.

In one case, they may be engineers (flood control), in another physicians (typhoid epidemic), in another entomologists (grasshoppers). These all belong in the realm of the physical sciences, and most people in our culture look to these specialists for guidance, if not for the handling of such matters. But when administrative problems involve the manipulation of people, instead of rivers and germs and bugs, there is less willingness to leave them to specialists. Even though some of us would turn to professional educators to deal with illiteracy, social workers for the treatment of marital conflict, and recreation leaders to guide the use of leisure time, others would insist on giving the jobs to deserving Democrats (or Republicans) or leaving the whole business to kindhearted laymen. However, if we agree to make use of specialists, the methods of teaching adults to read and write, of reconciling or separating quarreling spouses, and of keeping idle youth occupied are technical matters. They are social problems of a limited and special sort.

A few years ago, the relief administration of a large American city was in great confusion. Within a few months, the number of applicants for aid multiplied twentyfold. Sometimes they had to wait two or three weeks before a visit was made and it was decided whether they might receive assistance or not. Hundreds of persons stood all day waiting in lines which were often exposed to rain or snow. Some of the people—both staff members and relief clients—became frantic; others became sullen. Newspapers were critical. The mayor set up a special committee to consider those who felt they had not been properly dealt with by the relief administration. Such numbers flocked in to complain that the confusion was increased. City officials accused social workers of being "wound up in red tape." Businessmen charged city officials with "playing politics with the unemployed." The situation was very chaotic. How to straighten out such a tangle was certainly a social problem. It was social in that it involved the breakdown of a

social institution, the relief agency. It was social in that it involved the clash of mutually critical groups. But no one questioned the necessity of helping the families of unemployed workers. Few questioned whether this was a responsibility of the city government. In other words, it was not a problem of policy but of administration.

The practical questions to which members of the relief department, city officials, and interested citizens sought answers were: how to give appropriate aid without delay, how to make prompt inquiries, how to reduce the waiting in line, how to keep information up to date, how to correct mistakes of fact and judgment, how to modify the relief given to fit changed circumstances in needy families. Some of the attempted solutions were: relocation and rearrangement of offices, increase of paid staff, enlisting of volunteers, better training of personnel, establishment of a complaint department, arrangements for co-operation with schools and churches. The nature of the efforts put forth indicates clearly that the problems in people's minds were essentially administrative. Only a few were questioning the relief program as a whole or the economic system which seemed to make it necessary.

Other examples of administrative problems may be presented more briefly. Whenever there is a flood the urgent questions are: how to organize rescue work, how to get first aid to those who need it, how to provide temporary shelter and food, how to prevent epidemics, how to occupy the time of refugees, and how to prepare for the resumption of accustomed activities. To perform these tasks, calls go out to the National Guard, the American Red Cross, and other public and private organizations. Sometimes they function rather smoothly. But sometimes debate arises as to whether martial law is necessary, whether a governmental unit or the Red Cross should be in charge, whether control should be local or state or national, how much money should be raised for relief and rehabilitation. All these questions are social in that they

involve a considerable number of people, whose customary activities and relationships have been violently disturbed, whose needs can be met only by organized efforts, concerning which there may be some disagreements. Nevertheless, they do not raise issues of broad social policy. They are essentially matters of administrative detail.

An interesting lot of problems arises in relation to civil service. As between those who advocate a merit system and those who prefer political patronage, there is a question of policy. But for those who believe in a merit system, there are many administrative questions. These pertain to classification of positions, determination of proper qualifications for each job, fixing rates of pay, inducing suitable persons to take examinations, devising examinations that will measure qualifications accurately and objectively, evaluating the efficiency of those in positions, determining the most effective procedures for promotion, demotion, and discharge. These are not large issues of social policy, but they are important details of administration. They can hardly be settled by public debates or at the polls. They are technical problems for specialists.

In actual life, it is not so easy to separate problems of administration from problems of policy. Even when the specialists have established appropriate techniques for controlling tuberculosis, soil erosion, drug addiction, or any other condition considered undesirable, there remain the tasks of securing needed legislation, appropriation of funds, and popular support. There may be opposition from religious groups that depend on faith healing, from professional organizations that fear "state medicine," from syndicates that distribute opiates, from farmers who object to changing their systems of tillage, from "rugged individualists" who fear bureaucracy. Wherever we find clashing interests, beliefs, and attitudes, we have a social problem, a question of policy or of morals. With it may go a technical problem. Both may occur in the same social situation.

*Problems of Policy.* Concerning matters of public interest, there are several possibilities. (1) The specialists may agree and the public may accept their judgment. In a democracy, where we are accustomed to argue about almost everything, this does not seem to happen very often. But when it does occur, there is no longer any social problem, except in the limited sense of technical details. Thus, the specialists hold that milk for urban distribution should be pasteurized or its purity safeguarded in other ways. In many cities, this dictum has been accepted by the government and by the consumers. There remain only problems of enforcement. (2) The specialists may agree, but laymen may reject their conclusion or divide over the issue. Thus the medical profession has demonstrated the effectiveness of vaccination in checking smallpox. But many people object to vaccination as a violation of their personal freedom or religious liberty. In 1930, the Congress of the United States passed a tariff act which most economists regarded as unwise. In fact, about 1,000 of them petitioned the President to veto the act. Nevertheless, it was allowed to become a law. (3) The specialists may disagree, which may mean that they have failed to find a solution to the technical problem in hand or that the successful ones have failed to convince their colleagues. When this happens, we may be sure that interested laymen will not fail to divide over the issue. An example of such disagreement is that over the best means of national defense. Military and naval men, as well as statesmen and citizens, debate the relative merits of aircraft and battleships, public and private manufacture of munitions, large and small armies. In this and in the preceding type of situation, we have problems of policy and of public opinion.

Most of the issues which confront large groups are of the third type, although there is often partial agreement among "experts." This is true concerning unemployment. Everyone agrees that mass unemployment is quite undesirable. The American Association of

Social Workers has gone on record [1] in favor of unemployment compensation or insurance, an extensive program of public works, and "straight" relief for those not reached by the first two schemes. This organization has protested against the W.P.A. as an unwise attempt to combine employment and relief. It has said that public works should be developed solely on the basis of the need for bridges, power plants, schools, roads, and so forth; and that men should be hired on the basis of their ability to do the work. However, a minority of social workers has maintained that it is so much better for a man to do some kind of work than to be "on the dole" that even "busy work" should be accepted until something better is provided. In accordance with the latter view, the Federal government has continued a program of work relief, in which projects and employment are based alike primarily on the need of providing income. The public has been sharply divided over the whole matter. In the discussion, there has been a great deal of inconsistency. Thus certain newspapers have condemned the government's program but have urged large W.P.A. allotments for their own communities.

Since 1929, a good many schemes of administering unemployment relief have been tried out. None has been altogether satisfactory. Objections have been constantly voiced, and the tide of protest seems to have risen higher and higher. Many citizens—themselves having reduced incomes and increased taxes but no lack of the necessities of life—complained that the W.P.A. was pauperizing the nation; the "security" program should be abandoned; private industry would absorb those able and willing to work; private charity would care for the incompetent; and the rest of the "lazy bums" could choose between starving and taking the jobs that were offered. But there was no agreement on these propositions. Opponents of these views said that it was not relief

[1] *The Compass* (Feb., 1936, and Mar., 1937).

but want and insecurity that pauperized folks; that private industry had its chance and failed to provide employment for millions who were able and willing to work; that private charity could not possibly raise the funds necessary to care for the unemployable; and that most of the unemployed were not "lazy bums." Evidently this controversy involved more than a problem of policy; it was also a clash of deep-seated opinions, sentiments, and attitudes.

An even greater divergence of social philosophies—if we may call them that—appeared between those who were concerned with helping the unemployed and those who hoped to abolish unemployment. The latter group not only condemned all programs of relief as futile, but insisted that there must be some fundamental reorganization of the economic system. They held it to be necessary and possible to smooth out the business cycle, spread the benefits of technical improvements, and dovetail seasonal work. Some of them thought this might compel us to give up private ownership of the means of production; others thought "capitalism" needed only modification. Some urged public ownership of all industries, while others preferred a system of co-operative organizations. Many thought that governmental regulation of business would suffice, while a minority cried for a policy of hands off. The whole matter was complicated by the fact that people did not line up in well-defined groups. Those who agreed on certain points fought bitterly about others. There was no unanimity among Republicans or Democrats or Socialists or Communists; none among businessmen or wage earners or farmers. All was confusion. Here was not only a social problem: it was a tangled web of interlocking issues; it might well be called a problem situation.

Another problem situation pertains to the issues of war and peace. Everyone in his right mind agrees that war is a terrible thing. But there are many different opinions as to when, if ever, it is better to fight than to yield. There is much debate about the

best ways of keeping out of war. Some would require a popular referendum before war could be declared. But others point out that nowadays nations do not bother to declare war; they just start to fight. Some pin their faith on a neutrality act, forbidding the sale of munitions to belligerents, perhaps forbidding all commerce except on the basis of "cash and carry," prohibiting our citizens to travel on the ships of countries engaged in war, and so on. Others show the difficulty of determining just what are munitions of war and point out that cash-and-carry trade would practically involve taking sides with the nation or group that happens to control the seas. The advocates of a referendum and of a neutrality act believe that we should have a settled policy in advance of hostilities, while others express a preference for administrative discretion. Some hold that the best way to keep out of war is to have an army and navy "second to none," while others believe that the very existence of powerful fighting forces increases the chances of our becoming involved. They further show that such a program leads almost inevitably to a very expensive armament race.

Another argument about the prevention of war is between the "isolationists" and the believers in "collective security." The former refer to Washington's Farewell Address and urge that we have as little as possible to do with other nations. The latter urge that we enter into agreements with individual nations or join some kind of "society of nations," with pledges that the combined forces of all shall be utilized to prevent open conflict. These folk in turn disagree as to what should be done if some nation should start a war. Should the peaceful nations use their armies and navies against the disturber; should they engage in an economic boycott; or should they merely register their moral disapproval? In some cases, they do not seem to be quite sure how to identify the "aggressor." Again we have a very involved situation, but basically it is agreed that war is undesirable. The confusion lies in the many different beliefs, feelings, and programs for the prevention of war.

In all these problem situations, there is more than a hint of people wanting to eat their cake and to keep it. They would like to see everyone enjoy prosperity and security, but they also want to retain the economic system under which it seems to be inevitable that a large minority of the population must remain in poverty or insecurely perched on its edge. They would like to see an abundance of the good things of life, but they also want to continue business in terms of scarcity values. They want economy in government, but they also want large appropriations to be spent in their own community and state. They approve of conservation "in principle," but they also believe that they should have the privilege of exploiting coal, petroleum, gas, timber, and other natural resources in ways that will yield immediate financial returns to themselves. They are eager for world peace, but they choose to preserve the present world map with its population pressures, monopolies of raw materials, ethnic minorities, and divided economic areas. Willard Waller has described cases like these as conflicts between the "humanitarian mores" and the "organizational mores." [2] He means that in situations of this type men's kindly feelings lead them to advocate a program of reform while their vested interests keep the program from succeeding. They rationalize their inconsistency by saying that humanitarianism must be "reasonable," must not "go too far," must not disturb the "fundamental social institutions."

*Moral Problems.* We have now reviewed two large groups of problems: (1) technical and administrative questions that have to do with carrying out programs on which most people are pretty well agreed, and (2) questions of policy, wherein people are agreed that a given situation is undesirable and that something ought to be done about it, but disagree sharply as to what should be done. Both these might be called moral problems in so far as

[2] Willard Waller, "Social Problems and the Mores," *American Sociological Review*, 1 (1936), 922–933.

they affect human welfare and involve the relationships of folk to one another. But there is a third kind of problem, in which people disagree as to whether given behavior is really bad. The conflict is not about what should be done to eliminate a recognized evil, but whether there is an evil present and whether the situation demands any action at all. Problems of this sort, we have chosen to designate as moral, because they pertain directly to the mores. They may represent conflicts between the mores of different groups (possibly culture conflicts), or decline in traditional controls due to changed material conditions affecting a single group (possibly cultural lags).

One such conflict has to do with child labor. For a long time, children in our part of the world have had work to do. So long as most of them lived on farms and worked for their own parents, so long as the work they did was the best possible preparation for their adult careers, there was little discussion of the matter. But when some children began to work in factories under foremen who cared little about them, when the kind of work they did was no longer a good preparation for later employment, when formal education became more important and child labor interfered with it, then a social problem arose. Some people, seeing hazards to health, education, and morals, described child labor as an evil and sought to have it abolished. Others, thinking in terms of an earlier day, or perhaps fearful lest the state usurp functions of home and church, insisted that child labor was no evil. Thus, there was no agreement about the mores; there was no common "definition of the situation." There was a lot of bad logic and some misrepresentation in the arguments that occurred. Antagonists were not always talking about the same thing. But there was a real difference of opinion and sentiment as to the rightness or the wrongness of child labor.

Another moral problem in our country has to do with social drinking, sometimes confused with drunkenness. The latter is

quite generally condemned, although there have been sharp clashes over the best means of bringing it under control. There have been advocates of prohibition, high license, state dispensaries, temperance pledges, medical treatment, and imprisonment for inebriates. These conflicts constituted problems of policy. But the question of whether all drinking is bad was (and is) a moral problem. In part, this may be described as a cultural conflict, for there are in our country ethnic groups that have long had very different customs and codes with reference to alcoholic beverages. Our Latin friends are accustomed to wine with meals. The Germans brought the beer garden to America with them. Still others introduced their national drinks and convivial habits along with a belief that their use was right and proper. But there were also groups that either arrived as nondrinkers or became such after a time in this country. Confronted with the abuse of liquor by acquaintances, fearing violence from Indians or Negroes, annoyed by the periodic "sprees" of employees, or believing alcoholism responsible for industrial and traffic accidents, a growing number of people became convinced that all drinking of alcoholic beverages was an evil. Whole communities and then states outlawed "the demon rum." In some sections, a generation grew up unacquainted with alcohol and believing its use to be a mark of depravity. Thus a great struggle developed, giving us prohibition, then its repeal, and leading now we know not where.

Another moral conflict in our culture has to do with divorce. The history of this struggle is too long to trace here. But it should be noted that divorce is not something new in the world. Its practice has been widespread for many centuries. In the late Roman Empire, divorce was generally considered a private matter concerning neither state nor church. The early Christian Fathers disagreed over its permissibility and over grounds which might justify it. Then followed a long struggle between ecclesiastical and civil law, whose outcome in this particular matter was

the complete prohibition of divorce, although this stringent ruling was partly offset by provisions for annulment and legal separation. Divorce was permitted under various conditions in colonial New England, but not in the Old South. At the present time, our laws and practices vary all the way from no divorce in South Carolina to easy divorce in Nevada. The position of the Roman Catholic Church and some of the Protestant churches is one of uncompromising opposition, while other religious groups regard it more favorably. A large number of Americans have long since ceased to consider divorce an evil. Instead, they look upon it as one way of resolving the conflict between a man and a woman whose marriage has become intolerable to either or both. Thus again we have a struggle over the mores. It is not merely a matter of social policy, but of fundamental conceptions of right and wrong.

One of the most bitter controversies now going on in the United States pertains to birth control, in general, and to contraception, in particular. Legal provisions range all the way from Connecticut's prohibition of the use of contraceptives and Mississippi's forbidding oral information to the absence of provisions against contraception in twenty-one states.[3] Reuter has stated the case on one side:

> . . . Birth control is to be understood as one of the great ideas of the world. It gives control over a fundamental process. . . . It takes an important natural function out of the realm of superstition and ignorance; it brings an important natural process within the orbit of conscious, responsible control.[4]

and Father Lord on the other:

> . . . Thanks to the birth controllers America suffers a falling birth rate, the dying off of the best elements in our population, broken homes,

[3] *The New Republic*, 94 (1938), 324.

[4] E. B. Reuter, "The Positive Side of Birth Control," reprinted from *Marriage Hygiene*, Bombay, 1936.

more divorces than any nation in history, gigantic selfishness. Theodore Roosevelt correctly called it race suicide.[5]

While the moralists have argued, through the press and in court, advertisers, manufacturers, and distributors have apparently been making a lot of money stimulating and satisfying a demand for "prophylactics," "antiseptics," articles for "marriage hygiene," and various other devices for preventing conception. Thus the struggle is not merely between believers and unbelievers, but between various groups of businessmen, between merchandisers and physicians, between bootleggers and public officials. In addition, those who accept contraception in principle often disagree as to the best techniques and the most satisfactory administrative procedures. But behind all these clashes is a conflict over the mores.

*Academic and Scientific Problems.* Social problems, as we have discussed them so far, pertain directly to everyday life. People of every sort are concerned with tuberculosis, unemployment, floods, conservation of natural resources, prohibition, divorce, war and peace. Their concern is usually "practical," and often personal. That is, they want to know what to do; or they think they know what should be done, but are distressed because their program is not adopted; or they are worried by "agitators" who "create issues where none exist." Perhaps they themselves are out of work, a relative has tuberculosis, their home is the scene of marital conflict, their employees are threatening to strike, their town has been struck by a hurricane. Perhaps they are social workers, physicians, engineers, directors of civic organizations, or public officials, and have some responsibility for "social action."

In contrast with this direct, practical interest is that of students, teachers, and researchers. They are presumably somewhat removed from the actual struggle. They are supposed to be "disinterested," "unbiased," and "objective." Because they are not directly con-

[5] From a handbill distributed in St. Louis in November, 1935.

fronted with the "real" problems of "real" people, they are often regarded as "cold-blooded," "impractical," and "visionary." Both groups—the immediate participants and the outside observers—may look askance at each other. Each group may feel that the other is incompetent to deal with social problems. Something may be said for each side, but we are not concerned here with the relative merits of viewing a situation from the inside versus viewing it from the outside. We merely wish to point out that they are two very different things. Each may supplement the other, but neither is a substitute for the other.

The questions of the "insiders" usually take the form of "What are we going to do about it?" But the "outsiders" are more likely to ask such questions as these: "What have we here? How did it come to be? What difference does it make? What are the alternatives?" Eventually, the answering of these questions may be of great practical value. But immediately, they seem rather remote from the world of action. Now it is precisely this being on the side lines that enables the student to carry on the kind of work that we call scientific. He is not under pressure to get something done at once. He can take whatever time may be required to delve into anything that promises to yield a better understanding. The physician caring for children with infantile paralysis must do what he can immediately and continuously to promote the recovery of his patients. The research student in his laboratory may use data which he secures from the physician, but he is under no obligation to cure anybody in particular. Of course, he would be glad to discover and report without delay how this disease develops and spreads. But if a long time is required, he is relatively free from the pressure of taking care of sick folks. So it is with unemployment, marital conflict, and juvenile delinquency. The social worker is expected to do something at once to relieve a "bad" situation; that is what he is paid for. He has no time to dig out the "basic causes" of these problem situations. Yet if he knew more about their

origins and development, he might be more effective in dealing with them. So he looks to the research of specialists to reveal the facts and the interpretations that are beyond his own reach. The research workers, not being responsible for getting jobs, stopping quarrels, or leading scout troops, can hunt and hunt until they learn how trouble arises and what happens if some factor is added, altered, or removed. Now we have exaggerated the difference between social practice and social research as they are really carried on. Some practitioners work in rather leisurely fashion, while some researchers rush to get difficult assignments completed within fixed time limits. But, in general, the distinction we have made is valid.

Another difference between social practice and social research is that the former has to do with many aspects of particular situations while the latter has to do with a few aspects of many situations. Thus a social worker in a children's aid society is concerned not only with a child's homelessness or neglect or troublesome behavior, but also with his education, his health, and his family. The administrator of a soil-conservation program must consider not only the make-up of the soil in question, but also the processes of erosion from wind and water, the customs of the people who till the soil, the various uses to which the land might be put, possible markets for new crops, the need and feasibility of removing part of the inhabitants to other areas, and so on. In contrast, the research worker will not concentrate on any particular child or farming section. He will select a limited problem which appears in many children or in many agricultural districts. Thus, he may seek to discover the possible relation between broken homes and sexual irregularity, or the correlation between social development and the age of placement in foster homes. He may try to find whether rate and degree of soil depletion are associated with types of farm tenancy, or whether there is any connection between the kind of schools and the success of conservation programs. In

other words, the researcher selects, out of many situations, particular factors for intensive study. He abstracts these items from the living wholes of which they are a part, in order that he may learn more about them. He is enabled to do this because he is not responsible for social treatment.

Once again, we must warn against exaggerating the differences between "insiders" with their "practical" concern and "outsiders" with their "theoretical" interests. The social worker and the soil conservationist must collect facts, must conduct investigations in order to get practical results. But they assemble data about particular situations, just as a physician examines particular patients in order to make a diagnosis and plan medical treatment. The information about particular persons or situations is studied in the light of general principles with which the practitioner is familiar, in order to identify the trouble and adopt a scheme of treatment which promises to bring results. The academic students assemble data about many persons or situations in order to test old generalizations or arrive at new principles. Their materials are thus drawn from more sources but are more limited in variety while they are working at a given scientific problem. Their purpose is not to diagnose a particular individual or situation, but to discover types of factors and situations, their characteristics, their interrelations, and the processes through which they come into being.

There is another difference between the work of those who are responsible for direct action and those whose task is to develop new generalizations. The practitioners care a good deal about the individuals with whom they are working, and are eager for their methods to succeed. So much depends on the theories behind their treatment that they must hope and assume that these theories are sound. The researchers, on the other hand, are relatively indifferent to the persons whom they are studying. They are not supposed to care whether the result of their inquiry confirms or destroys some previous generalization. As students of scientific problems,

they are not trying to get Mrs. Jones to the clinic, or find a foster home for Johnny, or reform the alcoholic father of the Smith brood; they are not promoting the New Deal or the Old Deal, "state medicine" or medical individualism, a neutrality act or military preparedness. They are simply trying to discover the facts and what they mean. Mrs. Wembridge has stated this interestingly with reference to anthropology.

> Just as a trained botanist gazes through his microscope without exhorting his specimen to be other than it is, so the anthropologist makes notes on the customs of strange people but declines to moralize over them. In fact, instead of protesting against what he sees, he often describes the most appalling social behavior with considerable relish. "Aha!" he whispers from his ambush under a cocoanut tree, "they seem to be drowning the mother-in-law at this wedding, instead of burying her alive as on yesterday's island. With a few more ceremonies I shall soon have enough data for my new book." That is how he looks at it. Science for science's sake. He stretches out no hand to change a tribal custom. He merely asks it to sit and have its picture taken.[6]

*Summary.* We have seen that the term social problems means all sorts of different things to different people. To clarify our thinking, we have undertaken to classify the various conceptions into two major types and three subtypes. The major types are: (1) practical problems of everyday life and (2) theoretical problems to be studied by scientists. The practical problems are: (*a*) technical and administrative questions, (*b*) matters of social policy, and (*c*) moral issues. Technical and administrative problems stand out most clearly when there is general agreement about the end to be achieved and the general program of action. The difficulties are largely those of detail, and their solution is essentially a task for specialists. Problems of policy appear when there is general agreement that something is undesirable and that something ought to

[6] Eleanor R. Wembridge, *Survey*, 60 (1928), 156. By permission of Survey Associates, Inc.

be done about it, but there is disagreement as to the program of action. There may be a partial consensus among specialists, but public opinion is divided. Moral problems involve a contest about the rightness or wrongness of given conditions or behavior. They are not debates about what should be done, but whether anything should be done. They are conflicts over the mores. The lines between these three types of problem situations are not sharp; the differences are a matter of degree rather than of kind. Nevertheless, the distinctions seem helpful to us. These three types are alike in that they involve urgent matters which affect people directly and personally. All of them may be contrasted with the type of problems which we call academic and scientific. These problems call for research rather than direct action; they are properly narrower in scope, but require data from more sources; their solutions must be generalizations rather than diagnoses. Students of these problems are supposed to be relatively detached, unbiased, and unconcerned about immediate practical considerations. These differences between scientific and nonscientific problems can easily be exaggerated. Again, the distinctions involve gradations rather than abrupt changes.

In this book, our attention will be devoted primarily to problems of the last type. We shall not ignore practical social problems, but shall abstract from them certain scientific—specifically sociological—issues which we believe worthy of study.

## Suggested Readings

Bossard, James H. S., *Social Change and Social Problems*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938. Chapter 1, "Social Problems: Their Meaning and Social Significance," is a good discussion of the issues raised in our own chapter.

Frank, L. K., "Social Problems," *American Journal of Sociology*, 30 (1925), 462–473. One of the first critical discussions of conventional writings in this field.

Fuller, Richard C., "Sociological Theory and Social Problems," *Social*

*Forces*, 15 (1937), 496–502. In this, and the article listed next, the notion that there is a sociology of social problems is seriously questioned.

Fuller, Richard C., *et al.*, "The Problem of Teaching Social Problems," *American Journal of Sociology*, 44 (1938), 415–35. A symposium in which several conflicting points of view are brought together.

Phelps, Harold A., *Contemporary Social Problems*. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1938. Chapter 1, "Social Problems and Human Values," Chapter 21, "How Social Problems Develop," and Chapter 22, "The Scientific Study of Social Problems," are of special significance in connection with the subject of the present chapter.

Waller, Willard, "Social Problems and the Mores," *American Sociological Review*, 1 (1936), 922–33. An interpretation of the clash of organization and humanitarian mores.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Let each student list what he considers the chief social problems of his home, community, and his state. State them both as topics and as questions. Discuss the relative advantages of the two forms. Ask why these are believed to be *social* problems. Classify them as suggested in this text, namely, as (1) technical and administrative problems, (2) problems of policy, and (3) moral problems. Which of them may be considered practical and which academic?

2. Take any daily newspaper or a weekly such as *Time*, *The New Republic*, *Life*, or *Newsweek*. Point out items which deal with social problems. Formulate these as questions. What is it that renders each of them a *social* problem? Formulate, in relation to selected issues, practical problems and scientific problems. Classify the practical problems as they pertain chiefly to (1) administration, (2) policy, and (3) the mores.

3. Advanced students should read, abstract, compare, and evaluate the articles and chapters cited in the bibliography at the end of Chapter 2.

4. Consider the problem of the unemployed youth of today. Most people are agreed that this is in the class of "social problems" about which "something ought to be done." What various policies have been initiated in attempts to deal with this problem, such as N.Y.A., C.C.C.

camps, proposals for W.P.A. jobs, and the like? What persons—specialists, experts, laymen—favor the various policies?

5. Compare the various administrative and technical problems which are offered in the following plans in attempts to meet the needs of the aged: California "ham and eggs" measure; Bigelow plan of Ohio; Social Security Old Age Insurance benefits. (For the purpose of emphasizing the technical side, the various issues of policy might be eliminated, if desired.)

6. Classify some of the recent discussion regarding the United States' position of neutrality and how best to maintain it, under the headings suggested in this chapter.

# *Chapter 3*

# APPROACHES TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS

IN the preceding chapter, we undertook to make a distinction between practical problems of everyday life and theoretical problems to be studied by scientists. In this chapter, we shall consider the various sciences that have some bearing on social problems. We shall show that, in studying dependency, delinquency, disaster, race conflict, and the rest, one may approach a troublesome situation from the point of view of biology, psychology, economics, or sociology. No doubt still other sciences might be utilized in examining various aspects of social problems, but these will serve our immediate purpose. To make the matter more concrete, we shall first present a brief account of a delinquent boy and suggest some of the ways in which one might seek an understanding of his behavior.

### Kenneth McGregor [1]

Kenneth McGregor was a thirteen-year-old boy whose chief trouble, viewed superficially, seemed to be that he was "too good a mixer." He had talents as a comedian and a lively temper, both of which he displayed at school to better advantage than whatever capacity for learning he possessed. Kenneth's was an impulsive, irresponsible nature; his life was full of ups and downs. He would worry about some prospective punishment while acting in the very way most likely to bring it upon him. Then, when he found himself in difficulty, he yearned for an opportunity to clear away from the irritating situation. Kenneth had been

[1] Adapted from *Three Problem Children* (1924), pp. 77–128, by permission of the Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency. Reprinted by permission of the Commonwealth Fund.

in juvenile court twice; once at the age of eight for turning in a fire alarm, and again at ten for helping to rob a grocery store.

His father, who had long since disappeared from the domestic horizon, was known for his continuous drunkenness and utter brutality. When Kenneth was eight months old, his father had struck him over the head with a beer mug. Mrs. McGregor lived in constant fear that Kenneth, who displayed some traits like his father's, would grow up to be like him. She also had the poor judgment to express this fear repeatedly in Kenneth's presence.

The boy's school record was a history of failures. He had been in five different schools in seven years, because his mother moved frequently to escape the father, before the latter disappeared for good. Kenneth had repeated 1A, 2B, 3A, 3B and 4A, and was now repeating 4B. He was known at school as a liar, a petty thief, and a truant. At a certain psychiatric clinic, he was labeled "a moral imbecile, emotionally unstable." But another examiner rated him simply as a "dull child with inferior intelligence." His intelligence quotient was reported to be .81. However, Kenneth showed good mechanical ability and some fine personal traits. He was affectionate, generous, and helpful in the home. He never held a grudge and was sorry that he worried his mother.

One source of maladjustment was found to lie in the fact that, although he was definitely left-handed, his teachers had compelled him to use his right hand. There is a good deal of evidence to show that this was a primary cause of failure, unhappiness, and desire to escape and make a fresh start. Kenneth indulged in masturbation and smoking, but a boys' club leader influenced him to give up both these habits.

Economic difficulties were not in the foreground with the McGregors, yet there were financial problems to be solved. Mrs. McGregor had to work and hence could not give as much time to her boys as she wished. In order to secure an apartment whose rent was within reach, the family had to live in an undesirable neighborhood, where Kenneth fell in with a gang of boys who among other things engaged in a series of robberies.

One commentator summarizes Kenneth's case thus: "Not content with giving him an unfortunate father, fate endows him with genuine left-handedness, sends him to a man who on no valid evidence at all calls him a 'moral imbecile,' and caps the climax by putting him in a

school conducted on factory lines. She makes amends by giving him a good mother and putting him in touch with the Bureau."

Because Mrs. McGregor was a sensible woman, the sources of trouble in the home were readily corrected. It was school adjustments which were hardest to effect. When Kenneth happened to have a teacher who was "an educator and not a factory boss," he did well. But under the ordinary school regime, with its grades, report cards, promotions, and other machinery submerging the educational process, he got into trouble. A social worker from the Bureau spent much time trying to find the right school and the right class for Kenneth. She saw that he had the opportunities of a boys' club and summer camp. The evil wrought by holding up Kenneth's older brother as a model was corrected, first, by showing the mother how unwise this was; second, by inducing Kenneth to accept as quite natural his brother's superiority in certain points; third, by getting Kenneth an independent paper route (he had been helping his brother, Walter, with his).

*Nonscientific Approaches.* Before going ahead to indicate some of the ways in which a biologist (or physician), psychologist (or psychiatrist), economist, or sociologist might proceed to study problems suggested by Kenneth McGregor, we may profitably review some approaches that are definitely not scientific. Technical questions, such as whether to send this delinquent boy to an industrial school or put him on probation, are practical rather than scientific, although the findings of several sciences may be very useful in making the decision. Such questions as what types of misconduct may be checked or what types of personality may be rendered socially acceptable by institutional treatment or otherwise may be attacked in a scientific manner. The distinction is the one made in our earlier discussion between examination and treatment of a particular case, on the one hand, and comparative study leading to new generalizations, on the other. This point should be sufficiently clear to require no further elaboration. But there is another distinction which does deserve our attention. It is between the calm consideration of either a practical or a theoretical prob-

lem, on the one hand, and the emotional reaction of frightened or indignant citizens, on the other.

Many a boy with a record like Kenneth's has been dubbed "incorrigible" and sent to a reform school. The usual reaction to the aggravating conduct of such a lad is emotional rather than intellectual. It takes the form of calling names rather than seeking to understand. Those who have been annoyed by his misconduct find satisfaction in blaming him for his perversity and demanding that he be punished. This is a form of release for their pent-up feelings. When it is identified with "the wrath of a jealous God," its subjective value is enhanced, and it takes the form of "righteous indignation."

It may very well be, therefore, that explanation in terms of sin is an attempt to rationalize one's emotional outburst against a troublesome member of society. At all events, it has been common, from time immemorial, to charge a disturber with offending the Deity. By a simple extension of this idea, people interpret all sorts of human ills as divinely imposed punishments for the violation of sacred laws. This was the assumption of Jesus' disciples when they asked the Master about the causes of a case of congenital blindness. "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" This same notion is more elaborately set forth in the thirty-seventh Psalm, of which we shall quote only one verse: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

We are inclined to doubt the adequacy of this theological explanation and to agree with the clergyman whose comment on the sentence quoted from the Psalmist was, "But I have." Indeed, we have observed people whose piety and moral probity were above reproach, but who nevertheless found themselves in the midst of serious difficulties. Moreover, even when we do find poverty,

sickness, and ignorance associated with "incorrigibility," we may properly suspect that, instead of "meanness" being the cause of misfortune, something else may be the cause of both. At least two of Kenneth McGregor's teachers explained his school failure and misconduct as a case of "willfulness and carelessness." Their statement was not fundamentally different from the inference of Jesus' disciples concerning the blind man. But to us, this expression is itself evidence of the teachers' failure to understand and hence to deal successfully with Kenneth.

> In many children, of whom Kenneth is a fair sample, the irritating behavior which drives teachers and parents to distraction is not due to sheer perversity and original sin, but to a real intellectual and emotional weakness. The importance of this changed interpretation of familiar facts lies in the different approach to the problems which it suggests. For while exhortation and punishment have been the accredited means of dealing with natural depravity, changing conditions to meet unchangeable factors in a child's make-up is rapidly becoming the approved method wherever the newer psychological understanding prevails.[2]

As in the case of Kenneth McGregor, problems of social treatment have to do with the practical procedure to be adopted in particular instances. They may be formulated and studied quite dispassionately and systematically from several different points of view. In these respects, social practice closely resembles social research. But very often people approach problem situations with strong biases and with the emotions of fear, anger, disgust, or pity. They are so eager to do something that they cannot wait to search for important facts; they substitute guessing for inquiry. Above all, they moralize and call names; they condemn or they praise.

Now we do not wish to be misunderstood with reference to moralizing. All of us, as citizens, neighbors, parents, or children, must pass moral judgments on all sorts of matters every day of

[2] *Three Problem Children*, p. 119. By permission of the Commonwealth Fund.

our lives. Circumstances arise which compel us to take action or to form opinions. The judgments we pass are, in part, derived from the mores, the accumulated wisdom of our culture groups; in part, they emerge from our wrestling with new and strange situations. This is nothing of which to be ashamed. Even scientists behave more or less in accordance with the mores and pass judgment on moral questions. But when they do these things, they are not acting in their capacity as scientists; they are "just folks."

Whenever any of us, confronted with a problem of human relations, suspends judgment, compares the immediate situation with others, and weighs the merits of conflicting demands, he is behaving somewhat like a scientist. But whenever we get excited, jump to conclusions, and demand immediate action, we may be considered very brave, generous, patriotic, or otherwise virtuous; certainly we are not scientific.

*Biological and Medical Approaches.* In the story of Kenneth McGregor, one of the most interesting and significant parts is his mother's firm belief that he has inherited his undesirable traits from his father, and that he is, therefore, foredoomed to be just like his father. A good many other people have been so impressed with instances of real or apparent heredity that they are prone to regard such a statement as a complete account of the trouble. Others, who recognize clearly that heredity is not the whole story, nevertheless deem it most important to emphasize the biological inheritance of the individual or group concerned.

The appearance in almshouses, hospitals, prisons, and other institutions of members of the same family generation after generation has led to studies of such kinship groups as the Jukes and Kallikaks. These studies seemed to support the hypothesis that such conditions as feeble-mindedness, "insanity," and low resistance to disease are transmitted through the germ plasm. They indicated that such behavior as stealing, wandering, alcoholism, and sexual promiscuity were either inherited or traceable to physical

traits that were inherited. Unfortunately, many of these attempts to study a biological problem were made by persons not specially qualified to work in this field. Hence, it is not surprising that many of their data and conclusions have had to be discarded. However, there is a bona fide problem or group of problems in genetics calling for the most careful research. The old statement in terms of heredity versus environment has been pretty well discarded. But there continues to be active study of ways in which the material of which human beings are composed (heredity) and the conditions under which they live (environment) interact to make them what they are.

Out of the popular interest in reducing the numbers of "socially inadequate" persons and out of the scientific studies pertaining to genetics have developed the technological problems of eugenics: How can the reproduction of inferior stock be checked and the reproduction of superior stock promoted? These questions, of course, cannot be answered until there is some agreement about what stock is superior and what is inferior. They also involve problems of social control as well as problems of human biology.

The possible contribution of biologists to the understanding of social problems is by no means limited to matters of heredity. They are interested in all the physical conditions (bodily, not geographic) which may prove to be significant aspects of social situations. Thus, the moral issues pertaining to the use of alcoholic beverages attract the attention of physiologists. They are concerned with changes produced in the body through the ingestion of alcohol. They have skills and facilities for identifying and measuring what actually happens. If, in the moral conflicts that rage between prohibitionists and their opponents, anyone cares about these facts, he must turn to the biologists for his information. Similarly, if one wants to know the relative efficacy of various contraceptives, and hazards to health involved in their use, he may turn to the gynecologists and related specialists.

In the case of Kenneth McGregor, there were some physical conditions that may have been causally related to the boy's troublesome behavior. His pubertal development was delayed; he was slightly nearsighted; there was a glandular condition whose correction ended the boy's bed-wetting. These are samples of physical factors which need to be considered in efforts to understand the development of tension and conflict between persons in both primary and secondary groups.

Some social problems have to do with the support, education, and guidance of persons who are blind, deaf, crippled, or suffering from specific diseases such as tuberculosis, diabetes, syphilis, malaria, cardiac disorders, and so on. Some problems pertain to the prevention of communicable diseases through control of contacts, vaccination, and other devices. If social programs for the promotion of health are to be effective, they must rest in part on information which the biological and medical fraternities are most competent to provide. This information may be expected to cover origin and development of various physical conditions, prospects for recovery, restrictions on activity, modifications of attitudes, and the changes in laws and resources which might aid in the control of diseases and other handicaps. The last two kinds of information overlap somewhat the fields in which psychologists, social workers, lawyers, and others are active. In fact, there are numerous problems whose solution may require the collaboration of specialists from the biological and the social sciences. Such problems are these: What types of social relationships, attitudes, folkways, mores, occupations, incomes, schooling, religious affiliation, and the like are associated with the appearance, development, or control of specific physical handicaps? What changes take place in the social status and roles of persons experiencing given physical conditions?

Questions of heredity and of health are frequently involved in social problems. When separated out of the total situation, for

special study, they furnish tasks to physiologists, bacteriologists, geneticists, and other biological scientists. When attention shifts from the organism to behavior, help must be sought from another set of specialists—the psychologists and psychiatrists.

*Psychological and Psychiatric Approaches.* We have seen that at least one person thought the explanation of Kenneth McGregor's school failure and misconduct lay in his low level of native intelligence. Indeed, it is quite likely that this was one of the factors, for his I.Q. (intelligence quotient, meaning ratio of his mental age on the Binet scale to his chronological age) was .81. This level is sometimes called "dull normal." Interestingly, Kenneth displayed some mechanical ability and, when conditions were favorable, he got along rather well both at school and at home. This indicated that either environmental factors, or other aspects of the boy's own make-up, or both were significant in the problem situations. So the psychologist and psychiatrist concerned themselves with Kenneth's habits, attitudes, wishes, repressions, and, in general, with his emotional life and overt behavior.

A few years ago, it was believed by many people that the "key" to much social maladjustment—stealing, prostitution, alcoholism, vagrancy, "radicalism," poverty, race conflict, and so on—lay in mental deficiency. In 1931, Sutherland reported about 350 American studies of the intelligence of delinquents. He raised many questions about the reliability and validity of the tests, representativeness of the offenders who were examined, and inferences drawn. However, he concluded that "the type of crime is affected somewhat by intelligence. Those convicted of fraud are generally a more intelligent group, those convicted of sex offenses generally a less intelligent group. The evidence is not conclusive, however, regarding many other particular offenses." [3] There is, therefore, still work to be done by clinical psychologists on the relation be-

[3] E. H. Sutherland, "Mental Deficiency and Crime," *Social Attitudes*, edited by Kimball Young (1931), p. 372. By permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

tween levels of intelligence and delinquency, poverty, and other kinds of "misconduct and misfortune." Many studies have already been made of the intelligence of school children and its relation to failure, retardation, and dropping out. Less has been done in industry to determine the general intelligence and special abilities of misfits, inefficient workmen, and those who have accidents, in contrast with those who work regularly, rapidly, and accurately. So far as we know, nothing of consequence has been done to see whether there is any relation between intelligence of individuals and membership in religious sects, support of political machines, participation in civic activities, supporting or opposing social movements such as those identified with prohibition, birth control, pacifism, Fascism, and the like.

Intelligence might be considered to include sensation, perception, association, and memory, but the term can hardly be stretched to cover persistence, suggestibility, fear, hope, disgust, and affection. However, these emotional and volitional phases of personality are quite as important as the intellectual. Hence, psychological and psychiatric studies of the "socially inadequate" have to do with such matters as inhibitions, worries, compulsions, mental conflicts, feelings of inferiority and insecurity, food antipathies, and so on.

Many social groups are troubled by members whom they call queer, erratic, stubborn, mean, unreasonable, and other uncomplimentary names. These folk are not necessarily abnormal; sometimes they may be quite normal. But their strained relations with their fellows suggest the importance of having them studied by psychiatrists. This does not mean that we suspect "insanity" (which, by the way, is a legal term) of playing an important role in social problems. On the contrary, we anticipate that specific cases of serious mental disorder will appear rather infrequently in problem situations. The main point to be emphasized here is that, whenever there are tensions or conflicts between persons or groups,

it is legitimate and should be profitable to study them from the standpoint of the ideas, feelings, and habits of the individuals concerned. Such study is a task for psychologists or psychiatrists or both.

Some years ago, a mental-hygiene survey in industry revealed instances like the following, which indicated the presence of incipient or mild cases of mental disorder.[4]

Man who thought he could not do his job, and was found to be worrying about the headaches of his wife, also an employee. When given assurance that his wife would be transferred to a position more favorable to her health, he made good.

Girl who could concentrate only until an early hour of the afternoon. Every few weeks she would get wild and leave her work, saying she could not stand it another moment. Her problem was solved by putting her on two different jobs and changing her work every day at noon.

Man who occasionally stops work to sing and preach; suddenly stops, and, with a laugh, goes back to work.

Man laid off in slack season after fifteen years of employment has such an unfavorable reputation that it will be hard for him to find another job. Talks continually, is suspicious, thinks everybody against him, and has given some reason to question his honesty.

Foreman, a high-strung man, in whose department all the employees seem tense and irritable.

Colored laborer who would dress up once or twice a month on Saturday in white trousers, frock coat, and silk hat, and walk up and down main street of the works. On that day he would not report for work, but otherwise was a satisfactory employee.

In facing the mass unemployment that has been with us since 1929, social workers and others have been impressed not only with economic issues and health problems, but also with questions of morale. So, impressions were recorded and some studies were made of the emotional reactions of jobless men and their families.

[4] Mary C. Jarrett, in *National Conference of Social Work* (1920), pp. 338–9. By permission of the National Conference of Social Work.

The principal way in which unemployment affects mental health is by imposing strains and anxieties on people. The adaptive capacities of human beings can stand just so much. When stresses boiling up from within (such as pent-up feelings) or when those impinging from without (such as painful factual experiences) become too great, something has to give. Some persons seem naturally more free from internal stresses and better able to resist external ones than do others. But even with these sturdy men and women, some experiences beyond their control (like mortal danger, war, grave illness, and, just now, the economic crashing of our times) may become so severe or so prolonged that the staunchest of adaptive capacities falter and at last surrender. When this happens, regardless of the cause, the mental health of such individuals is impaired. Moreover, it seems probable that many others who may have been on the borderline of mental ill-health for some time before unemployment will now go under. . . .

It is important to understand that these attitudes are not just the casual expressions of sheer cussedness (as some people still believe) nor the earmarks of a chronically disgruntled personality. They are, instead, the signs that John Jones and his wife are inwardly frantic with fear and are nearing the end of their rope in the struggle to adjust their needs for food and shelter, as well as their conceptions of themselves, their normal wills-to-power and their self-esteem to the thwarting that loss of job necessitates. These attitudes (defiance, suspicion, depression, etc.) are just as infallible symptoms of a state of mental health that is beginning to crack under the strain of trying to adjust, as physical pain or fever are symptoms of some approaching bodily illness. Both need immediate and understanding attention if the disease process is not to grow serious.[5]

From her extended experience with families in which marital discord is prominent, Mrs. Mowrer has concluded that many of these situations are traceable to habits and attitudes developed before marriage.[6] Some of the husbands and wives had divergent ideas about marriage, some were afraid of pregnancy, some were ashamed of sex, some were in the habit of dodging unpleasant or

[5] Geo. K. Pratt, *Morale* (pamphlet, 1933), pp. 7–8, 13. By permission of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

[6] Harriet R. Mowrer, *Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord* (1935).

difficult issues, some played dual roles, and, in various ways, all of them displayed habits, beliefs, and feelings that were significant parts of the conflict situations.

In addition to "mental" reactions and overt behavior that are accepted as normal and those which diverge moderately from the usual, psychologists and psychiatrists also study serious cases of mental disorder. Some of these disorders are known to be associated with organic diseases of the nervous system, others are called "functional." Patients display all sorts of symptoms, including delusions of grandeur and of persecution, hallucinations, loss of memory, inability to associate ideas, exhilaration, depression, excitability, and immobility. Obviously, such people are difficult members of almost any social group. What to do about them involves problems of administration, policy, and sometimes morals. But the scientific problems of identifying and accounting for mental disorders fall chiefly in the realm of psychiatry. The scientific problems of determining deviates' roles in social groups and their relationships to other persons are shared with sociology; in fact, they belong primarily in that field.

*Economic Approach.* Having just come through a decade of hard times, we are probably more aware of the economic aspect of social problems than of some other phases. As a matter of fact, the economic approach has been utilized more consistently than any other. However, a general sense of economic issues must not be confused with an understanding of the methods and findings of the economists.

Modern economics may be said to have arisen out of efforts to understand the sources of poverty, individual and national. At the end of the eighteenth century, increasing numbers of Englishmen were receiving public relief. Taxes were increasing, and much criticism was leveled against the poor laws—a situation not unlike that with which we are now confronted in the United States.

While taxpayers complained of expenses, and the poor complained of inadequate relief, a few students and scholars devoted their time to seeking for the "basic causes" of economic distress. It is not our purpose here to defend or attack any of the theories that have been propounded, but simply to call attention to problems at which economists work. Malthus thought he found a clue in the tendency of population to multiply faster than the means of subsistence. Adam Smith pointed to governmental interference with the free play of economic forces. Karl Marx indicted the whole capitalistic system with its profit motive and exploitation of the working classes.

The challenge of the socialists served to open a great many questions which have been the objects of theorizing and research for nearly a century. At first, economists speculated about "natural laws," but, as the years passed, they spent more and more time collecting factual data and analyzing them by approved statistical methods. Among the questions thus studied are these: How efficient is the existing system of business and industry? Is the lure of profits an adequate motive to stimulate the production of needed goods and services? Is the public better served under the auspices of "free competition" or of monopoly? If the former, how can competition be kept "free"? If the latter, what kind of monopoly yields the largest returns of goods and services? How much waste is there in the production, distribution, and consumption of goods? What are the reasons for this waste? By what means might it be reduced? In general, what might be expected under systems of government ownership and operation, under co-operative societies, under public regulation of private industry, under collective bargaining between organized workers and their employers?

The "orthodox" socialist doctrine of "the economic interpretation of history" is conceded by many to be a one-sided and particularistic account of social change. But it helped to call attention to

the undoubted fact that many poverty-stricken persons are in distress through the operation of forces inherent in the economic organization rather than because of character defects.

It is interesting that a great deal of private charity and most public relief has been directed toward the meeting of economic needs. To be sure, there has been increasing attention to problems of health and of personal relations, but, all through the ages, emphasis has been laid on poverty and its alleviation. Today, the social-security program has to do primarily with economic issues—provision of financial support for the aged, compensation for those unwillingly deprived of jobs, allowances for needy children and their mothers, material assistance for many others who lack the funds with which to provide the necessities of life. In recent decades, the records of social agencies have furnished valuable data for the study of factors involved in material deprivation and destitution. By examining the present circumstances and past experiences of impoverished persons, students have shed some light on the factors and processes involved.

But economists are concerned not only with the income and expenditure of individuals; they are devoting a great deal more time to larger aspects of our economic life. Thus, they study unemployment less with reference to how individuals come to lose their jobs than with reference to how, in general, people are deprived of their opportunity to earn a livelihood. They seek to identify types of unemployment, to discover sources, and to measure costs. Among other things, they study the general trends of commerce and industry in terms of the business cycle. They look for the relation of new inventions to the displacement of workers. They consider seasonal variations in the demand for labor and means of dovetailing short-time jobs. They inquire about employment policies, especially as these involve middle-aged workmen, members of minority groups, the handicapped, and those who are active in labor organizations.

Economists note the uneven distribution of incomes, not only as between individuals, but as between large elements in the population. Thus, they have discovered that farm folk receive much less than "their share" of the national income, that the ratio of prices farmers receive to those they pay have varied (in terms of index numbers) from 117 to 61 during the past twenty years. They observe the distress that accompanies these fluctuations; they search for means whereby they may be reduced and values stabilized. They inquire what happens to urban purchasers of farm products when the prices of these goods rise. Great numbers of industrial wage earners receive very small incomes. When their wages are increased, are the prices of products they help make also increased, and, if so, does the sale of such goods decline? In the end are they more or less able to buy food and other articles that come from farms? Just what balance might be struck between the income of the industrial and agricultural populations?

Economists undertake to assess the natural resources, the mechanisms of production and distribution, and the labor supply. They have not yet solved the problems of how much we have and how much we might produce, but they are agreed that, with certain changes, we could raise the general level of living in the United States. They hold that it is not inevitable that people should go hungry while grain, fruit, and vegetables rot; that people should be without clothing while cotton is plowed under and mills stand idle; that people should live in obsolescent houses while building materials and labor are unused. They ask what it is that gives us mass poverty in the midst of relative plenty.

In addition to domestic problems, economists are concerned with certain aspects of international relations. They study the natural resources of the "have" and the "have not" nations. They look into the flow of foreign trade and the operation of tariff laws and reciprocity agreements. In brief, they are concerned with the economic aspects of international rivalry and co-operation: those which

lead to conflict, those involved in the ability to carry on war, and those which appear at the end of a struggle.

It is probably safe to say that there is an economic aspect of every social problem, though, in some cases, it is overshadowed by the psychological, biological, or sociological. Hence, it is important to have specialists devoted to study of natural resources, processes of production and distribution, and the significance of these for individuals and groups.

*Sociological Approach.* The story of Kenneth McGregor, with which we opened this chapter, presented issues that suggested a variety of approaches. It indicated certain biological problems of heredity and physical health, psychological problems of intelligence and emotional reactions, but no economic problems of significance. Above all, it suggested sociological problems of personal relationships, of status and roles in social groups, of popular attitudes toward delinquent boys, of institutional machinery such as school, court, and clinic.

Many of the problems discussed in the second chapter are sociological when translated from the form of individual diagnosis and treatment into the form of generalized processes of social interaction. Social workers are concerned with how individuals have got into trouble and how they may be helped out. Sociologists are concerned with the typical series of events involved in violation of the mores. To understand Kenneth McGregor required the collaboration of social worker, physician, psychologist, and psychiatrist. To discover what kinds of personal give-and-take follow one another with some consistency in the development of delinquent careers is a problem for the sociologist. Hence, he assembles life histories which he attempts to reduce to sequences of type events. He compares many such series to see whether he can find type series. In the life histories, he will find physical facts (such as Kenneth's left-handedness), psychological facts (such as his relatively low intelligence), economic facts (none outstanding

in Kenneth's case, but, in others, low income, irregular income, and such), but, with all of these, he is concerned only as they are associated with changes in social relationships. Identification and interpretation of physical conditions constitute a task for the biologist and medical man; of mental conditions, one for the psychologist and psychiatrist; of financial conditions, one for the economist and social worker. The correlation of such factors with roles and status in social groups may well be shared with the sociologist. Identification of characteristic social relationships and their life cycles is a task for the sociologist himself. That is, the sociologist is not concerned with glandular conditions, feeble-mindedness, or unemployment as such, but as objects of attention and attitudes in the interaction between human beings. The attitudes of Kenneth's teachers toward his left-handedness and of his mother toward the boy's resemblance to his father have sociological significance when we compare them with the attitudes found in other situations.

With reference to the aged, there are studies that may be made by various kinds of specialists. The physiologist may direct his attention to the characteristic changes in organic structure and function that take place during senescence. The psychologist and psychiatrist may trace the breakdown of association, memory, orientation, and skills with advancing years. The economist may carry on research as to the savings or poverty of the aged, the costs of caring for them, and various methods of financing old-age-security programs. The sociologist is interested in changes that take place in the social relations of elderly persons: their acceptance or rejection by children and friends, the frequent decline in prestige, the loss of social contacts, the diminishing participation in group activities. Incidentally, he compares the social status and roles of old people in various cultures to get some idea of what relationships are correlated with senescence as such and what ones may be correlated with various culture traits.

In similar fashion, the sociologist interests himself in the various roles assumed by all sorts of persons, the status that is assigned to them, and the extent of their social participation generally. He wants to know what kinds of relationships they are capable of entering into and those which are made available to them in different social situations. He asks how they make their adjustments to changed cultural settings and to altered circumstances within a given culture.[7] He wants to know how it comes about that some persons are relatively isolated from their fellows while others have a wealth of personal associations. He seeks to learn the origins of interpersonal conflicts and the factors associated with their persistence or accommodation. He is interested in the differences between persons who "carry their share of the load" and persons who accept benefits without responsibilities.

But the sociologist's task carries him far beyond the social relations of individual persons. He is concerned with groups and institutions as "superorganic" structures. One of the first groups to be studied systematically is the family. Among the sociological problems pertaining to the family are these: What is the characteristic life cycle of the family in given cultures? What variations are found? What happens to the members when a family goes to pieces? What factors are associated with family unity and with family disorganization? In general, what are the processes through which families become integrated, develop effective joint action, win recognition, or move in the opposite directions?

Other groups to be studied by sociologists are the neighborhood and the community. Again they are looking for the life cycle, the "natural history," or the expected sequence of events in the rise, carrying on, and decline of social groups. What are the marks of neighborhood or community "strength" and "weakness"? In what circumstances is the disintegration of a neighborhood associated

[7] The study of the adjustment processes is shared with psychology in the hybrid discipline known as social psychology.

with the integration of a community? In what circumstances does the disorganization of the two proceed together? What significance attaches to changing modes of transportation and communication, heterogeneity of population, growth or decline of population, exhaustion of natural resources, discouragement following a boom, and so on?

Of late, sociologists have given increasing attention to the study of interest groups such as clubs, lodges, fraternities, political and religious organizations. Once more, the objects of their search are the characteristic life cycle of each type of group, factors associated with growth and decline, and the significance to members when a group becomes stronger or weaker or finally collapses. They are also interested in the relations between groups, whether they take the form of conflict, accommodation, or assimilation. Before we can really understand, and hence control, partisan politics, trade-unionism, Red-baiting campaigns, the Townsend movement, and similar features of contemporary society, we must learn a great deal more about the processes through which groups of the general type involved develop, continue, struggle with other groups, and finally disappear. When sociologists shall have accomplished this task, they may well be credited with a major contribution to the understanding of current social problems.

Besides groups there are other kinds of social structures that interest sociologists. These are sometimes called culture traits and complexes, sometimes folkways, mores, and institutions. The distinction between groups and institutions has been stated thus:

> A group is primarily an aggregation of persons, while an institution is a relatively permanent and formal way of dealing with certain situations or phases of the common life. It arises out of relatively fixed needs and wants and is passed on as part of the social heritage. It is a cultural complex made up of traditions, codes, ceremonials, administrative machinery, and physical equipment, although not every institution contains all these elements. While groups are made up of persons, institutions represent the impersonal

side of social organization. Thus Episcopalians constitute a group, while the Episcopal Church is an institution. Similarly Republicans, soldiers, and students make up groups, while the Republican Party, the army, and the university may be regarded as institutions. Other institutions are still more general in character and scope, being paralleled by no well defined group. Such are the English language, the monogamic family, private property, representative government, and the like.

Sumner long ago traced the development of institutions from need through trial and error to folkways, thence, with the addition of some "philosophy of welfare," to mores. As they become more definite and specific with regard to rules, prescribed acts, and apparatus, a structure is built up; an institution is complete. Park and Burgess have offered a somewhat different interpretation, tracing the rise of institutions through social movements. For them the sequence is likely to be: discontent, agitation, a disorderly movement, emergence of leaders, slogans, and dogmas. At this point the movement may be said to have reached the stage of a revival, reformation, or revolution. If it is successful, its machinery will take more definite shape and become relatively permanent. With general acceptance it becomes an integral part of the culture; it is an institution. Usually institutional growth involves a slow crystallization of sentiments, beliefs, and practices; but sometimes new institutions are set up within a brief span of time, perhaps in the midst of a crisis, as was the commission form of city government after the Galveston flood.[8]

Now, when peoples who have developed markedly different culture complexes—folkways, mores, and institutions—come into direct contact, it not infrequently follows that one or both cultures become disorganized. There is likely to be a clash which, in one of its aspects, is between two groups and, in another aspect, is between two sets of mores or institutions. In the first aspect, it is literally a struggle for existence or for status; in the second, it is figuratively a struggle between impersonal elements in the two cultures. It is profitable to follow such events from both angles. The cultural approach enables us to forget for the moment the individuals and collections of individuals that are pitted against each

[8] Stuart A. Queen, Walter B. Bodenhafer, and Ernest B. Harper, *Social Organization and Disorganization* (1935), pp. 41–2.

other, giving our attention to diverse and incompatible codes of behavior, systems of organization, philosophies of life. This is important, because even war is more than a struggle between, let us say, a few million Germans and a few million Frenchmen. If war should come between these two nations, it would be also a contest between two ideologies, two ways of life.

When many people of one culture migrate to a land in which another culture is dominant, there is almost sure to be a clash between the two groups and between the two cultures. The intergroup struggle may be relatively mild, but, in the second generation, the culture conflict is often very serious. It takes the form of inner or mental struggle. The children of the immigrant are often torn between conflicting loyalties, attractions, and demands. The parents say that one line of conduct is right and proper; the playmates ridicule this; the children of two worlds are confused and distressed. To understand the development of culture conflicts and their impact upon individuals is therefore to move toward an understanding of certain concrete social problems, notably those of delinquency.

Another hypothesis employed by sociologists is known as the cultural lag. This occurs whenever two or more related traits in a given culture change at different rates. The classic example pertains to industrial accidents. Ogburn [9] has pointed out the association of the handicraft system of manufacture and the common-law provisions for the fixing of responsibility in case of accidents. Since "master and servant" worked side by side and since the processes were rather simple, it was usually not difficult to fix responsibility for any accident that might occur. But, as the factory system developed, employer and employee were separated more and more; processes became more complicated; it became very difficult to fix responsibility anywhere. Nevertheless, the old common-law doctrines of "contributory negligence," "fellow servant,"

[9] William F. Ogburn, *Social Change* (1922), p. 213 ff.

and "assumption of risk" continued to guide decisions. In an earlier time, these were apparently appropriate defenses for employers against the occasional careless or grasping worker. In most cases, adjustments were made informally and more or less equitably on the basis of close personal relationships between master and servant. But, under the factory system, personal relationships disappeared and the old common-law defenses made it almost impossible for injured workmen to secure compensation. There were many lawsuits and few benefits. Between the rise of this situation and the development of industrial-accident insurance in the United States was a span of nearly fifty years. In other words, there was a lag of nearly half a century.

The same general hypothesis may be applied to the study of child labor, which we discussed in the first chapter. It is helpful in understanding the difference between the rates of change in the professional aspects of medicine and in its business organization. It affords a clue to the interpretation of inefficient county government, rural schools, private charity, and other familiar institutions. One advantage of this approach is that it tends to eliminate the habit of seeking a villain to blame for conditions we dislike. By substituting an impersonal approach, we become more objective and more likely to find what really happened.

*Summary.* We have now undertaken to differentiate scientific and nonscientific approaches to social problems. As citizens, neighbors, parents, and children, we must pass moral judgments and take action in all sorts of situations. We have a tendency to get excited, angry, indignant, or "sympathetic." We often jump to conclusions and demand immediate action. But, as scientists, we withdraw, stand aside, and become observers rather than participants. We select one or a few elements in a situation for special study. We compare them with the same or corresponding elements in other situations. We seek to arrive at general conclusions. We employ methods which other students can check. Among the vari-

ous scientists who may abstract specific elements from concrete situations of real life are biologists, psychologists, economists, and sociologists. Biologists and physicians are concerned with the human organism, its heredity and health; psychologists and psychiatrists deal with the mental life and individual behavior; economists study the processes of production and distribution, business cycles, and costs of living; sociologists seek to discover the life cycles of groups and institutions, the processes through which interpersonal relations develop and change, intergroup relations, culture lags and conflicts. The findings of each group of specialists contribute to the understanding of social problems. Their co-ordination and application by social workers and other technologists or professionals facilitate the control of problem situations.

What we are undertaking in this book is, as outlined in Chapter 1, a rather specialized task. It is one type of sociological study of persons and situations involved in social problems. While the issues presented may seem quite varied, attention throughout is centered on the question of social participation. Do specified physical, mental, economic, and social conditions limit the roles which given persons play in social groups? Do these factors restrict the number and variety of cultural opportunities and the activities in which these persons engage? This, as stated before, is only one of several approaches which might be made to social problems. In adopting it, we cast no reflections on students and teachers who choose some other frame of reference.

## Suggested Readings

Arnold, Thurman W., *The Folklore of Capitalism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937. Popular beliefs and feelings which are close to the heart of our social problems.

Chase, Stuart, *The Economy of Abundance*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934. The discrepancy between our economic resources and the goods and services available for consumption.

Epstein, Abraham, *Insecurity, A Challenge to America*. New York: Har-

rison Smith and Robert Haas, 1933. Mass insecurity, its sources, and its possible control.

Hooton, Earnest A., *Apes, Men, and Morons.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1937. An anthropologist's view of human problems presented through a series of essays.

Jennings, H. S., *The Biological Basis of Human Nature.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1930. A zoologist's approach to human relations, with special reference to genetics.

Morgan, John J. B., *The Psychology of Abnormal People.* New York: Longmans, Green & Company, 1936. A psychological interpretation of human misfits.

Plant, James S., *Personality and the Cultural Pattern.* New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1937. A psychiatric discussion of the interaction between personality and the social environment.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Ask the class to list facts and principles learned in various fields which seem applicable to one or more social problems. Consider especially biology (evolution, genetics, physiology, hygiene), psychology, economics, political science, sociology.

2. Take the case of Kenneth McGregor (reading the account in *Three Problem Children,* if available) and classify the seemingly significant items under the captions just enumerated. If preferred, some other case may be used for this purpose.

3. Arrange a conference with the head of a child-guidance clinic or visit such an agency and note the approaches to the study of the child made there. Examine the constituent parts of the record and information thought helpful in working with the child. Classify this under the various headings suggested above.

4. Illustrate various approaches to social problems by reviewing briefly such books as the following:

E. A. Hooton, *Apes, Men, and Morons* (biological and ethical)
James and Katherine Ford, *The Abolition of Poverty* (economic and ethical)
Mary B. Sayles, *The Problem Child at Home* (psychiatric and social work)
Ruth S. Cavan and Katherine H. Ranck, *The Family and the Depression* (sociological and psychiatric)

5. Describe some other texts in the field of social problems. Note their dominant emphases, types of data, sources of data. Consider such books as:

J. H. S. Bossard, *Social Change and Social Problems*
Mabel Elliott and Francis Merrill, *Social Disorganization*
J. M. Gillette and J. M. Reinhardt, *Current Social Problems*
J. L. Gillin, *Social Pathology*
H. A. Phelps, *Contemporary Social Problems*
S. A. Queen, W. B. Bodenhafer, and E. B. Harper, *Social Organization and Disorganization*

6. Compare with some of the sociological texts others making an economic approach to some of our present problems, such as:

Thurman W. Arnold, *The Folklore of Capitalism*
Stuart Chase, *The Economy of Abundance*
Paul H. Douglas, *Real Wages in the United States*
Harold G. Moulton, *Income and Economic Progress*

*PART II*

# OBSTACLES TO SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

## *FOREWORD TO PART II*

*HAVING now presented our frame of reference, or theoretical background, we proceed with some specific conditions frequently designated "pathological," or simply "social problems." Our interest is not in bringing together a miscellany of "sore thumbs," but in examining a number of factors in human life to discover whether and how much they affect the "victims' " social participation. Hence, as we discuss ill health, mental abnormality, economic deprivation, and social stigma, we are not interested in them per se, but in their effect on the social relations of persons affected by these "handicaps." We shall make some note of programs for dealing with these conditions and their social consequences, chiefly for the light they may shed on our central problem.*

*Our procedure in the several chapters will vary with the nature of the "handicap," the amount and kinds of data available, and the difference from, or similarity to, issues previously raised. But, in general, we shall present one or two case summaries followed by a discussion of the nature and incidence of the factor under discussion. Then we shall pay special attention to the relation of the given factor to participation in family, community, economic, and other interest groups. Where data are available, we shall also note the cultural contacts involved, as in reading, radio, lectures, movies, music, and the like.*

*This part of the book corresponds somewhat to the scope of conventional texts on social pathology. But our aim has been to produce a more unified and more distinctly sociological treatment.*

# *Chapter 4*

## SENESCENCE: THE AGED

MOST of the physical conditions discussed in this book are ones everyone wishes to avoid. No one wants to be blind, crippled, tuberculous, diabetic, or syphilitic. But most persons have at least vague hopes of attaining ripe old age. Despite the infirmities of advancing years, many people aspire to reach the scriptural three score and ten. This means that most conditions we have been considering are regarded as pathological, while senescence is looked upon as normal. Biologically as well as sociologically, this distinction appears sound. The bodily changes involved in disease and accident destroy tissues usually prematurely and unexpectedly. But in old age, there is gradual deterioration due to wearing out rather than to pathological processes. Nevertheless, there is a sort of ambivalence in most thinking and feeling about old age. We are inclined to recognize the slowing down, the lowered vitality, the dimming of sight, the slipping of memory, and other concomitants of senescence in persons older than ourselves. But, when we anticipate the advanced years of our own life, we somehow forget about these marks of decline. So it is on the social side. We often find our elders tiresome, demanding, and old-fashioned; we avoid them and push them aside. But, when we become old, we expect to carry on much as in our younger days. We present now the stories of an aged couple and an elderly woman whose experiences suggest some of the changes that take place in social relations as persons approach the end of life in our culture.

### The Lees, an Aged Couple

In midwinter some twenty years ago, Mrs. Garrison telephoned to the Family Welfare Society of her city that there was in her neighborhood an aged couple in destitute circumstances. A visitor went at once to call on the old people and found that Mr. Lee was sick, that both he and his wife were troubled with "rheumatism," and that coal and groceries were needed. They were living in a little cottage which the landlady let them have rent free. This generosity, in fact, continued, most of the time, for the next ten years. The Lees seemed to be nice old people; they had no children, but there were several relatives living in or near the city. Mrs. Lee was the great-granddaughter of a Revolutionary hero who had a claim against the government for a considerable sum which had never been paid. A bill to compensate the heirs was then before Congress.

Mr. Lee, aged seventy-one when this story opens, had been a saloon-keeper in his younger days, and was himself a drinking man. Relatives said that, while the money lasted, the Lees lived well, either "in the best of boardinghouses" or in their own home, keeping a servant. After a time, Mr. Lee failed in business and secured a position as stationary engineer, which he held several years until he fell and broke his hip. Since then, he has not been able to work at all. For nearly six years, he was a very sick man. This, with his wife's prolonged illness, consumed what savings they had and left them stranded. Mr. Lee for a long time seemed loath to accept "charity," although the necessity of accepting financial assistance over a period of years gradually broke down this attitude. He objected still more to all suggestions that he and his wife should go to the county home (almshouse). He seemed quite devoted to his wife and was anxious to maintain their home together as long as possible. About five years after our story begins, Mrs. Lee had a paralytic stroke and was taken to a hospital. He could hardly wait for her return and insisted that she be brought back after six months, although he was hardly able to care for himself. As years went on, Mr. Lee "got things mixed in his head," especially in regard to money matters. He never gave up hope of a Congressional grant, even when it was apparent to his friends that nothing would come of this. More and more he criticized his relatives for not coming to see him oftener and for not giving him more assistance. For both these charges, there was some excuse, although most of the relatives were unable to give much either of time or of money.

Mrs. Lee, aged sixty-three when our story begins, had been confined to her bed for three years with "rheumatism," but was now much improved. Later, however, she had a "stroke" which paralyzed her entire left side and from which she never fully recovered. She was rather hard of hearing and had trouble with her eyes. The stroke of paralysis seemed to affect her mind. What wonder that she became discouraged? She suffered much from the summer heat, became despondent, and wondered why she had to live. But afterward, she became more cheerful. When her husband berated the relatives, she always had some excuse for them. Also, she was much more willing than he to go to the county home. At the age of seventy-one, she had a second stroke of paralysis. She later died in the county home.

Mrs. Lee was one of eighty heirs to the estate of the Revolutionary hero mentioned before. But apparently the hope of getting an appropriation from Congress was the main, if not the only, basis of family solidarity. Five years after this account opens, twenty-six of the relatives gathered at the home of Mrs. Lee's cousin to discuss their expected windfall. They were much elated over the prospects and, at this time, agreed to see that the Lees should not suffer want. However, their good resolutions dwindled away with their waning hopes of public money. At no time was a definite plan made for co-operation in supporting and caring for the Lees, although certain individuals did as much as it was reasonable to expect. While the family itself may be justly charged with this neglect, still their inertia is not hard to understand, especially since Mr. Lee was "high and mighty" when making money and refused to help his poor relatives. It was the special responsibility of the social worker in charge to develop a definite plan for joint effort on behalf of this aged couple, and some effort was made in this direction. The visitor tried to bring about another family gathering to organize at least the financial resources, but the relatives did not assemble. Letters written to a number of relatives failed to bring any response. Most of those who lived in or near the city were seen individually in person. They were all found to be people of small means. One was a fireman, another a streetcar conductor. Mr. Lee's two sisters were almost as old as he. Their children and grandchildren were not greatly interested in the Lees nor able to do much for them. The most helpful relative was a sister-in-law of Mrs. Lee's, who gave from her own very limited funds, did washing for the Lees, carried them provisions, and helped to care for their house when she could.

There had been a good deal of irregular and unsystematic assistance from friends, relatives, and neighbors. This included rent, gas, food, clothing, stove, rug, coal, and such. One woman, who sent $10 a month more or less regularly, formerly ran a house of prostitution over Mr. Lee's saloon.

The social agencies concerned had, in the course of their dealings with the Lees, five distinct plans. (1) The first was to organize the relatives so that, each contributing a little, the old couple could be supported in comfort, it being expected that for some needs the Family Welfare Society or the county would make a small allowance. This failed, as has been suggested above. (2) The second plan was for the Daughters of the American Revolution to raise the funds necessary to secure admission to a private old people's home. Just when this seemed about to go through, the relatives told Mr. Lee that if they got any money from the government, the home would expect them to turn it over. After this, he would not consider entering the home. (3) Because Mr. Lee gave some account of having been a Confederate soldier, efforts were made through the Veterans of the Confederacy to secure the admission of the Lees to the State Home for Confederate Veterans. But Mr. Lee never offered information definite enough to establish his right to enter the Home. The visitor from the Family Welfare Society thought his memory was not so poor as it appeared, but that Mr. Lee had probably had some trouble, perhaps deserted or was court-martialed. (4) The fourth plan was to secure a county pension, and (5) the fifth was to send the Lees to the county home.

The Family Welfare Society sent a visitor regularly for twelve years and during much of that time helped with groceries and intermittently with coal and clothing. Altogether, the society has spent probably $1,000 for material relief besides rendering considerable personal service.

The county was appealed to for aid rather early in the history of this "case," but a pension was denied on the ground that the Lees should be in the county home. However, after nearly ten years, a county pension of $20 was secured. This was later increased to $25. About a year later, the couple was persuaded to enter the county home, where they stayed two months and then went to the home of Mrs. Lee's sister-in-law who had helped them so much before. For another year, the county pension was received. Then the Lees went again to the county home where Mrs. Lee recently died.

From time to time, medical agencies have helped look after the health needs of these old folks; two hospitals, a dispensary, and a dental clinic have served them. At Christmastime, the mayor's committee has remembered them. Mrs. Lee was kept from the "potter's field," and now arrangements have been made for Mr. Lee's burial when death, which cannot be long deferred, shall come. Relatives have kept up enough insurance to pay the funeral expenses, and a lot will be provided in a private cemetery.

### Mrs. Morgan, an Elderly Widow

Mr. and Mrs. Morgan belonged to what is often called the middle class, although their income and status were both well above average. Mr. Morgan was a successful businessman, his wife a social leader. She managed their large house, drove her own car, entertained frequently, and participated in many activities which centered around the church. Her disposition was usually cheerful, except when members of her family disagreed with her. Then she avoided them, would not talk, and was irritable for several days. Mrs. Morgan was usually very talkative and so outspoken in her opinions of friends and relatives that, to some, she seemed very intolerant.

The Morgans had two children, both daughters and both now grown. They were always fond of their father but less attached to their mother. Their opinions, attitudes, and habits were so different from hers that they rarely confided in their mother. They conformed to her wishes in order to avoid disapproval, which she expressed by pouting and silence. They suspected that their mother had always had her own way and was still pretty much of a spoiled child. She seemed to regard marriage and children as burdensome. She discouraged her daughters' acquaintance with young men and warned them against matrimony. Whether for this or for other reasons, one of the girls has never married. She is a professional woman living in a distant city. But the other, Mary, fell in love with Fred Brown, a rising young attorney, and declared her independence of her mother. Mrs. Morgan reluctantly consented to the marriage, but insisted that the young couple live near by.

When Alice, her first child, was born, Mary resented her mother's lack of interest and unwillingness to give presents or to care for the baby when she and Fred wished to be out at night. Of Peter, the second child, Mrs. Morgan was more fond. Mr. Morgan was interested in both grandchil-

dren, who were quite attached to him. When Peter was about a year old, the Browns moved, in spite of Mrs. Morgan's protests, and bought a suburban house in which to raise the children. The two families visited weekly, often spending week ends together in one another's homes. Both of the children romped a great deal with their grandfather, but Peter was the only one to gain the attentions of his grandmother.

Mr. Morgan had made adequate provisions for his wife in a material way, so, when he died suddenly of a heart attack, there were no financial worries. But there were personal adjustments to be made for which no one was prepared.

When Mr. Morgan died, Mrs. Morgan, who had never stayed alone before, came immediately to her daughter's house. She assumed that her home should be with Mary. And Mary, uncertain of what her duty was, reluctantly complied with the wishes of her grieving, lonesome mother and let the situation drift. Six months later, Mrs. Morgan sold her furniture and announced her desire to rent her house.

Mary tried to please her mother, managing the household and children, with her mother's comfort constantly in mind. She had the children obey their grandmother's new demands. She took her mother to club meetings or stayed with her at home. At night, she and Fred took her with them or stayed at home. At the end of six or eight months, Mary became aware of everyone's dissatisfaction with the changes in family life, and so she set about to modify them.

In attempting to arrange matters to suit both the family and the grandmother, problems arose over social activities, division of housework, and control and discipline of the children, which completely changed the temper of family life when Mrs. Morgan was at home. Mary was the member to plan the adjustments and to bear the brunt of the conflicts between her mother and the family, especially the children. She thought that she should have been "rubber-padded all around" to protect her from all sides in the situation. Fred was the only person whom she could depend upon to keep on good terms with her mother. He understood the strain of the situation and tried to minimize the seriousness of the problems.

During the first year, Mary dismissed the maid after an altercation between her and Mrs. Morgan, in the vain hope that additional housework would provide her mother with new interests and take her attention off the personal affairs and behavior of members of the family. Mrs. Morgan helped some with the housework but did not take active interest or re-

sponsibility. She disliked to cook, but she willingly mended whatever clothing Mary gave her to repair. She performed the routine task of helping with dishes and cleaning her own room, sometimes also Mary's and Alice's, and did as much extra work as she pleased. No formal division of tasks was arranged. Mrs. Morgan's help was too little to relieve her daughter much, but sufficient to deprive her granddaughter of practice and experience in housework. Mrs. Morgan even seemed at times to resent it when Mary asked Alice to help, especially in tasks which the grandmother was able to perform. Mary felt that perhaps her mother wanted to prove that she was capable.

Mary tried to arrange her social activities so that they might be more in line with her mother's wishes. During the first year, she and Fred accepted only two or three evening invitations without Mrs. Morgan. This cut them off completely from their old group of friends, and Fred objected seriously, though he understood why Mary thought it was necessary. They did not leave Mrs. Morgan in the company of the children, because she did not want the responsibility for their care. Neither could they hire someone to stay with the children and Mrs. Morgan when they were away, because Mrs. Morgan did not like to have anyone employed to stay with her. This arrangement was unfair to both Mary and Fred, but when Mary asked her mother to decide whether she should hire help or leave the children with her, Mrs. Morgan agreed, only after several arguments, to stay with the children. This was not entirely satisfactory, for the children and their grandmother did not get along well together. Mrs. Morgan's methods of discipline were unlike Mary's. Mary was uneasy and felt guilty when she was away, because she knew that her mother was not satisfied with the arrangement and might be unpleasant about it the next day.

Mary also withdrew from some of her own social activities about this time, partly to please her mother, partly to allow time for joint activities with her mother, and partly because of the type of social affairs that were given. Her mother criticized the church clubs, of which she was not a member, and complained that they made Mary too much work and interfered with household activities. Mary liked the clubwork and the club members, but she resigned from it and the study class. She took her mother to church affairs, where Mrs. Morgan made friends very easily, especially among the younger women, who soon invited her to their homes and luncheons. Mrs. Morgan joined the missionary society, two sewing clubs,

and a Sunday-school class. In spite of the new friends and activities, she said that she was still lonely and found the suburb unfriendly. Mary and Fred were very pleased with the way in which Mrs. Morgan had been accepted by Mary's friends, and so they resented her criticisms of the community.

A severe conflict arose over the discipline, control, and manners of the children immediately upon Mrs. Morgan's coming. It was never settled satisfactorily. Mary resented her mother's indifference to the children at their birth and was very sensitive to her mother's attitude toward them when she came to live with them. Though Mrs. Morgan would not take the responsibility for them in the evenings, she criticized their behavior during the day when Mary was supervising them. When Mary saw how this annoyed the children, she finally told her mother that she was not to feel responsible for their behavior. Mrs. Morgan became hysterical; she cried and complained that she was unwanted and in the way. For several days, she appeared so miserable that the family was upset and irritable. For a time after that, Mrs. Morgan seemed to be trying to control her criticisms. As the children grew older, Mary and Fred thought that Alice and Peter should be allowed more freedom to make their own decisions and to learn by experience in small things. Therefore, they gave the children more choice and less supervision. When Mrs. Morgan continued to direct the children, they resented it very much. Especially strong was the antagonism between Alice and her grandmother. Mrs. Morgan criticized her scanty clothing, her noisy friends and dates, the extra entertainment required for her friends, and her use of the car. Mary was not alarmed with her daughter's behavior, except when her mother's criticisms became so great. Alice was irritated with all of her family and interpreted whatever her grandmother said as criticism of her. Her parents finally sent her away to college in order to separate her from her grandmother. When she returned and was talked to about her grandmother's natural conservatism, she appeared less distrustful. At the present time, the chief trouble arises over the entertainment of Alice's friends; Mary wants them to feel welcome at any time, but Mrs. Morgan, by her criticism, discourages Alice from bringing friends home. Mary is quite disappointed.

Alice was not alone in her resentment of Mrs. Morgan's comments, for the latter was outspoken in her opinions about the activities of all the members of the family. Mary was annoyed by her suggestions about running the household, allotting her time and money, and caring for Mrs.

Morgan's linens and furniture. Mary was quite conscious of Mrs. Morgan's observation of her housework, and grew to dislike tasks which had been pleasant, because she felt that her mother was watching her. Mrs. Brown was unable to make her mother see that she had no right to manage her grown daughter's life or to criticize her ways.

The greatest changes made in family life, however, were in what Mary called the atmosphere at home: the details of living together, conversation, relations between members, expressions of sympathy, and sharing of interests. The presence of Mrs. Morgan, with her different points of view, her spoken or unspoken criticisms, and her insensitiveness to, and unfamiliarity with, the intimate family relationships, interfered with the spirit of comradeship which prevailed before. Conversation was stilted because certain topics of interest were points of contention between the family and Mrs. Morgan. Therefore, they heard less about the activities and interests of one another, and Mary found it especially difficult to keep track of the children without pointedly inquiring about their affairs when Mrs. Morgan was not present. Sunday, which had been a day for family association, was spent individually by the members, reading alone or going away with friends instead of doing things together. When the children had been small and had spent their Sundays with Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, it had not seemed difficult to comply with the Morgans' wishes for one day, especially when Mr. Morgan knew so well how to handle the children. But when restraints were placed upon them all of the time, the children tried to avoid their grandmother.

When they were alone in the summer, while Mrs. Morgan visited her other daughter, the family revived much of their old easy comradeship, took vacation trips together, and felt free to discuss one another's interests. They looked forward to these months alone and planned for them all winter.

The family life is dominated now by Mrs. Morgan's active and discordant influence. She appears happy to her friends, but is discontented at home. She has lost most of her friends and interests in the city, but still drives in at least once a week to see friends that remain. She has exchanged most of her city interests for new ones in the suburb, which she tells Mary are not so pleasant. She has more time now for visiting friends since her responsibility for her home is gone. Two or three days a week she spends away from the house, attending clubs and luncheons, and visiting. Her entertaining must be done in co-operation with her daughter, but they

often invite only the friends of one of them. Financially, she is independent, having money for personal needs, gifts, clothes, car upkeep, and entertainments.

Here we have two very different situations. The Lees were handicapped by various physical infirmities; Mrs. Morgan was in relatively good health despite her seventy-five years. The Lees gradually became destitute; Mrs. Morgan had sufficient funds to meet all her material needs. The Lees had no children or grandchildren; Mrs. Morgan had both. Mr. and Mrs. Lee spent most of their declining years together. Mrs. Morgan has been, for ten years, a widow. The Lees became almost isolated socially. Helpful relations were kept up with Mrs. Lee's sister and with the "madame" who had operated above Mr. Lee's saloon, but most of the kinsmen and former friends dropped away. Mrs. Morgan, on the other hand, had many active acquaintances; she participated in several groups, some formal and some informal; but her relations with kinsmen were strained. In fact, there was constant tension.

We do not know how representative these cases may be. In offering them to the reader, all we mean to suggest is that social participation tends to decline with advancing years, but the relationships and activities that are retained by old people show a wide variation. Some carry on much as before, except for a gradual tapering off; others experience sudden changes. Some continue in the midst of near kinsmen and friends; others are almost solitary. Apparently four groups of factors affect the degree of their social participation: physical health, mental health, finances, and the character of social relationships and activities in earlier life. Of these, we shall have more to say later.

*Number and Distribution.* The Fifteenth Census of the United States showed that there were 6,725,000 persons 65 years of age or over, and that they constituted 5.4 per cent of the population.

Of course, the age of 65 is chosen rather arbitrarily, for some people are physically and mentally old before that, and others remain vigorous and active long past that age. Between 55 and 65 were nearly 8,400,000 more residents of the United States. Table 1

Table 1

AGE AND SEX OF PERSONS 55 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, 1930 [a]

| *Age Group* | *Male* | *Female* | *Total* | *Percentage of Total Population* | *Sex Ratio* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 55–59 | 2,425,000 | 2,220,000 | 4,645,000 | 3.8 | 109.3 |
| 60–64 | 1,940,000 | 1,810,000 | 3,750,000 | 3.1 | 107.3 |
| 65–69 | 1,420,000 | 1,350,000 | 2,770,000 | 2.3 | 104.8 |
| 70–74 | 990,000 | 960,000 | 1,950,000 | 1.6 | 103.5 |
| 75–79 | 545,000 | 560,000 | 1,105,000 | 0.9 | 98.0 |
| 80 and over | 365,000 | 440,000 | 905,000 | 0.6 | 83.0 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 2, pp. 566–7.

shows the distribution by age and sex of all those who were 55 or over.

When we combine all the age groups from 55 up, we find that males outnumbered females, but, from 65 up, the two sexes were nearly equal in number, and, from 75 up, females outnumbered males. In all these age groups, there were more than the expected number of foreign born. This does not mean that foreigners outlive native Americans, but that, because of the practical stoppage of immigration, there were few young people among the foreign born, hence a high percentage of aged. There were more persons past middle life in urban than in rural America, although their relative numbers did not differ greatly, since more than half of the total population was classed as urban. However, there were rela-

tively more persons past 65 in villages than in cities or the open country. Perhaps this was due to the practice of many farmers retiring and moving to small towns.

More important than the present numbers and distribution of our old people is the trend of population change. Table 2 shows

Table 2

ACTUAL AND ESTIMATED NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS AGED 65 AND OVER, 1860–2000 [a]

| *Year* | *Number Aged 65 and Over* | *Per Cent Aged 65 and Over* |
|---|---|---|
| 1860 | 850,000 | 2.7 |
| 1880 | 1,725,000 | 3.4 |
| 1900 | 3,090,000 | 4.1 |
| 1920 | 4,940,000 | 4.7 |
| 1940 | 8,310,000 | 6.3 |
| 1960 | 13,590,000 | 9.3 |
| 1980 | 17,000,000 | 11.3 |
| 2000 | 19,340,000 | 12.7 |

[a] Adapted from *Social Security in America* (Social Security Board Publication No. 20 [1937]), p. 141.

the steady increase both in numbers and in percentages and includes estimates of future increases by the Committee on Economic Security. In no decade since the Civil War has either the number or the proportion of persons over 65 failed to increase. This consistent aging of the population is doubtless due to several factors such as the falling birth rate, improvements in medicine and sanitation, and, in the last twenty-five years, the limiting of immigration. Not all the effects of this trend may be identified with assurance, but the rapid development of old-age pensions, the proposal of bizarre schemes of financing, and the increasing attention of politicians to the demands of elderly people are unquestionably consequences of this important change in our population.

*Family Relations.* The United States Census offers us one bit of information that sheds direct light on the problem of old people's social participation. Table 3 shows that in 1930 there were over

Table 3

MARITAL STATUS OF PERSONS PAST MIDDLE LIFE BY AGE AND SEX, 1930 [a]

MALE

| | *55–64* | | *65–74* | | *75 and Over* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* |
| Single | 442,000 | 10.1 | 216,000 | 9.0 | 64,000 | 7.0 |
| Married | 3,408,000 | 78.0 | 1,655,000 | 68.7 | 462,000 | 50.4 |
| Widowed | 445,000 | 10.2 | 504,000 | 20.9 | 380,000 | 41.5 |
| Divorced | 66,000 | 1.5 | 30,000 | 1.2 | 7,000 | 0.8 |
| Unknown | 5,000 | 0.1 | 4,000 | 0.2 | 2,700 | 0.3 |
| Total | 4,367,000 | 99.9 | 2,409,000 | 100.0 | 916,000 | 100.0 |

FEMALE

| | *55–64* | | *65–74* | | *75 and Over* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* |
| Single | 360,000 | 8.9 | 195,000 | 8.4 | 73,000 | 7.3 |
| Married | 2,500,000 | 62.0 | 965,000 | 41.8 | 182,000 | 18.2 |
| Widowed | 1,120,000 | 27.8 | 1,132,000 | 49.0 | 737,000 | 73.9 |
| Divorced | 46,000 | 1.1 | 15,000 | 0.7 | 3,000 | 0.3 |
| Unknown | 4,000 | 0.1 | 4,000 | 0.2 | 2,000 | 0.3 |
| Total | 4,030,000 | 99.9 | 2,311,000 | 100.1 | 997,000 | 100.0 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 2, p. 838.

three and one-third million persons past 65 who were not living with spouses and an almost equal number who, classed as married, presumably were living with husband and wife. This means that the homes of nearly half of our old people have been broken. In contrast, note the high percentage counted as married in the age group 55–64. Obviously, the passing years diminish the probability of a couple being able to continue their life together.

Of course, the census data tell us nothing about the relation of elderly persons to their children and other relatives. Information

on this point is very scanty, but a few studies give us some indication of the domestic situations of the aged. Of 1,000 recipients of old-age assistance in New York City in 1934, 294 were living alone, 20 with strangers, 64 with friends, and 622 with relatives, including spouses.[1] Women more often than men were living in family groups, though the differences were not great. A general study of the aged in New York State in 1929 showed that almost exactly one half were dependent on relatives and friends. This suggests a fairly close tie with kinsmen, but, of course, does not give exact information on this point. Some relatives are known to make their contributions with reluctance and want no further dealings with their aged kinsmen. A study in the District of Columbia in 1934 indicated that 37 per cent of the aged were supported by relatives. A Massachusetts investigation in 1925 yielded the estimate that 74 per cent of the *dependent* aged were supported by children, and another 14 per cent by relatives or friends.[2] These reports all have limited value for the measuring of social relationships. Viewed negatively, they suggest that a great many old people are *not* being aided by children or other kinsmen. But even the absence of financial aid from relatives, or the receipt of public assistance, tells us nothing definite about social contacts. Elderly persons receiving pensions may or may not be welcome members of their children's households. But at least those who live in institutions have been largely, if not wholly, cut off from active participation in their kinship groups. There were reported to be, in 1929, 155,000 living in public and private homes of various types.[3]

General observation indicates that a change is taking place in our culture as it pertains to the aged. In an earlier day, when the population was almost wholly rural and agricultural, old folks stayed on

[1] *A Study of the Medical Needs of Recipients of Old Age Assistance in New York City in 1934* (New York State Department of Social Welfare, 1937), p. 18.

[2] *Social Security in America* (Social Security Board Publication No. 20 [1937]), pp. 152–3.

[3] Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin No. 489 (1929), p. 15.

the home farm, gradually turning over work and management to sons and daughters. After they could no longer carry on the more strenuous duties of farm and house, they could still perform many lesser tasks. The grandmother knit and darned, tended babies, and washed dishes. The grandfather cut kindling, fed chickens, and worked in the garden. When they became too feeble for petty chores, they were still cared for in the old home without interruption. Of course, they went out less often and curtailed or eliminated participation in church, lodge, town meeting, and the like. But usually, there was no sudden break with the past. Today, things are often very different. Children move away from the household and even from the community. They develop new friends, new habits, and new beliefs. Then, after a separation of from fifteen to twenty-five years, the parents give up their old activities and consider living with the children. They little realize how far apart the generations have drifted, how little room and how few opportunities for usefulness there may be in their children's homes. If the younger folks refuse to accept them, they are hurt and stunned. If they let the aged parent or parents come, both are surprised and irritated at the changes which have occurred. Tension develops; social participation declines. These are random observations. We do not know how frequently family ties are happily maintained, re-established, continued with friction, or entirely broken. But we are sure that the average American household is smaller than it was thirty or forty years ago, and we believe that part of its decline is due to the reduction in the number of elderly kinsmen included. "In 1900 each 100 households had 63 servants, relations, lodgers, boarders, but in 1920 the number had dropped to 49 and in 1930 to only 44, 33 of whom were relatives." [4] However, only future inquiry can provide the precise information we need. Meanwhile, we offer the hypothesis that more

[4] *Recent Social Trends* (1933), p. 682. By permission of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends.

and more old people are detached from relatives and that they participate less and less in the life of their kinship groups.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* Holding a job, carrying on a business, and practicing a profession are forms of social participation. They involve meeting people, belonging to occupational groups, coming and going with "the crowd." The story is told of a former college professor who refused to accept the idea that at seventy-eight he had no further usefulness. He went to the office of a social-work agency part of every day, where he did statistical work without remuneration. "When he stepped out of the building at 5:00 P. M. in company with the other workers, he belonged to the business world." [5] Cases like this show that for some people, if not for most, employment has a social as well as an economic significance. In addition to work itself being a form of social participation, it opens the way to other contacts and relationships. The income it yields enables a person to pay his way in various groups —union, lodge, club, church, and so on. It makes possible subscription to magazines and papers, purchase of books, attendance at movies, lectures, concerts, visiting friends, travel, and the enjoyment of other cultural opportunities. Hence, we are directly interested in all available evidence of vocational opportunities and economic resources of people past middle life.

It happens that the data are neither adequate nor consistent. But it appears that, from 1890 to 1910, the percentage of persons over 45 who were gainfully employed declined slowly but steadily. Since 1910, the percentage seems to have increased, but whether there has really been a gain in proportion to the growth in numbers of persons in the upper age groups, we cannot tell. The findings of several studies indicate that those past 45, and especially those past 55, have considerable difficulty in finding and keeping jobs, while professional and independent businessmen

[5] *Mental Hygiene of Old Age* (Family Welfare Association of America, 1937), pp. 28–9.

carry on with relative success into the sixties. There seems to be no proof of a general policy of dismissing older workers, but there is evidence of maximum hiring-age limits in industry. Epstein reported an inquiry of the National Association of Manufacturers in 1929 which showed that 30 per cent of the concerns investigated had upper age limits for the hiring of new employees.[6] Ten years later, the same organization reported only 7.5 per cent of employers as admitting such maximum age limits.[7] It further reported that 38 per cent of the companies said that in hiring they gave preference to workers under 40, mainly because of training and apprenticeship requirements and the physical demands of certain tasks. The survey showed no reduction in the proportion of employment for workers between 40 and 50 but did indicate a decrease for those over 50. Surveys in California and Maryland showed that "with each 5-year age group after 40 years, the ratio in each employment group is less than that in the corresponding population age group." [8] A predepression study of twenty-five large industrial concerns employing 140,000 persons showed that the percentage of employees over 55 was seven tenths the percentage of the population past the same age.[9] The unemployment census of 1930 revealed the fact that the percentage of unemployment lasting fourteen weeks or more increased steadily from about age 25 to about age 70.[10] In November, 1937, 19 per cent of W.P.A. workers were 55 years of age or over, while in 1930 only 14.1 per cent of gainful workers in the general population were in the same age group.[11] This is another indication that a disproportionate number of employable persons past 55 were unable to find jobs in private industry. Thus, we may conclude that older

[6] Abraham Epstein, *Insecurity, A Challenge to America* (1933), p. 493.
[7] Associated Press dispatch from Indianapolis, Jan. 9, 1939.
[8] Social Security Board, *op. cit.*, pp. 144–5.
[9] *National Conference of Social Work* (1930), p. 284.
[10] Fifteenth Census, *Unemployment*, vol. 2, pp. 329–30.
[11] R. Nassimbene, *Age of W.P.A. Workers, November 1937* (1938), p. 3.

workers are not suddenly cut off, but that their opportunities for employment tend to decline as their age increases.

So much for employment opportunities. We turn now to the incomes and property holdings of elderly persons. A Connecticut survey in 1932 showed that half of the persons over 65 had annual incomes less than $300; one third of them had no income whatsoever.[12] A Wisconsin study in 1915 indicated that almost one half of the persons over 60 had incomes less than $300; one fifth had incomes below $100, and less than 30 per cent had incomes above $500.[13] The same two surveys reported property owned by old people. In Connecticut, nearly half owned no property or less than $1,000 worth; only two fifths owned property valued at $3,000 or more. In Wisconsin, two fifths owned no property or none valued above $1,000. Other studies yield similar findings. Thus, it seems clear that a large part of our old folks lack the economic resources essential both to security and to any considerable degree of social participation.

This is further borne out by data pertaining to public assistance. In October, 1938, according to a report of the Social Security Board, 1,750,000 persons were in receipt of old-age assistance, which is supposed to be available only to those who have neither means of self-support nor children nor other near relatives able to provide for them. To be sure, these conditions are not always met, but, on the other hand, there are compensating restrictions. Applicants must be over 65 years of age (in some states, at this time, the minimum age was 70), and must have lived varying numbers of years in the same state. Hence, 1,750,000 is a rough measure of the number of aged persons who are either destitute or living on a very narrow margin. In later chapters, we shall examine evidence that financial limitations hamper social participation. Meanwhile, we accept this as a tentative assumption.

[12] Social Security Board, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 149.

*Health.* In the chapters immediately following this, we present evidence that disease and accident not only affect the physical organism of a victim, but also tend to restrict his social participation. Hence, data pertaining to health of the aged may be considered indirect evidence as to the possible social participation of persons advanced in years.

In a survey of chronic illness, completed by the Welfare Council of New York City in 1933, it was shown that one fifth of the sample of 20,000 persons thus incapacitated were 70 years old or more. It was also shown that one half of the residents of private homes for the aged were chronically ill. Stimulated by these findings, the State Department of Social Welfare decided to examine a sample of 1,000 recipients of old-age assistance to determine their medical needs.[14] Of these, 41 died and 11 refused to be examined; hence, the report covers 948 persons. Of the 948, 231 presented no obvious disability, i. e., no condition was found that interfered with ordinary activities. A larger number, 505, were not really well, but were up and able to get about, i. e., to travel, to find recreation, to attend a clinic. Homebound was the term applied to 165, who were not confined to bed or chair, but were limited to the yard or its immediate vicinity. Finally, there were 47 bedridden. This classification serves our purpose very well, for it is based on capacity to get about and engage in activities. From a medical standpoint, there were only 33 not found to have some specific disease. The largest number, 472, were suffering from diseases of the cardiovascular system. The next largest group, 106, presented diseases of the bones, joints, and muscles. Smaller numbers were diagnosed as having diseases of the respiratory system, nervous system, gastrointestinal tract, genitourinary system, and the endocrines. Nevertheless, 331 were regarded as having no urgent medical needs, and it was believed that 53 more could be

[14] *A Study of the Medical Needs of Recipients of Old Age Assistance in New York City in 1934* (1937). All data in this paragraph are taken from this report.

cared for by untrained persons under medical supervision. Over half, 564, were reported as needing professional medical and nursing care. While we do not have exactly comparable data for persons in younger age groups, we are sure that chronic illness handicaps a larger number of the aged than of younger persons.

Turning from physical to mental health, we find that severe types of mental disorder occur more frequently among persons in the higher than among those in the lower age groups. One indication of this is the fact that 19 per cent of patients first admitted to state hospitals in 1936 were 65 years old or more, compared with 5.4 per cent of the general population in the same age group.[15] Of course, not all mental patients go to state hospitals; some find their way to city and county institutions, others to private hospitals; but the fact remains unchallenged that advancing years increase the general probability of mental breakdown. However, the situation differs for different diseases.[16] Dementia praecox occurs most frequently among young persons, although some patients live to old age. The same is true of the psychoneuroses such as neurasthenia and hysteria. Manic-depressive psychoses, paresis, and alcoholic psychoses occur most frequently between 40 and 50. Involutional melancholia usually comes a little later. Cerebral arteriosclerosis and senile dementia belong definitely to old age. Those who have mental disorders in early life are often very troublesome members of society, but, with the exception of some types of dementia praecox, they are less likely to be isolated socially than are the victims of disorders which appear in later life. At least this inference is suggested by the nature of the several types of mental disease.

Our conclusions drawn from the indirect evidence referred to in this section are that old people may be expected to participate

[15] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease, 1936* (Bureau of the Census [1938]).

[16] Carney Landis and James D. Page, *Modern Society and Mental Disease* (1938), chap. 4.

less in social groups and in cultural activities, because, more frequently than younger persons, they are handicapped by physical and mental ailments. When we add the likelihood of institutionalization, we increase further the prospects of social isolation.

*Friends, Interest Groups, and Various Activities.* In a study of nearly 400 recipients of old-age assistance in New York State in 1933, it was found that less than half had friends who came in to see them.[17] Many of their friends had died. Contact with others was lost through moving to a new locality. Moreover, these losses were seldom compensated for by new associations. In particular, there was a lack of acquaintances among young people. Nearly three fourths reported that they had no young friends or seldom saw any. Only one eighth stated that young people they knew came to them for advice. "The indifference shown to them by young people was a source of great bitterness to most of our subjects." [18]

Over half of these New York old people had at some time belonged to some club, lodge, or union. Of those who had been members of such an organization, one third still belonged at the time they were interviewed. Of those who continued their membership, three fifths were still able to attend meetings. Thus only one tenth of the 400 old folks were active participants in one or more organized groups. Reasons given were lack of funds, broken health, death of old friends, and removal to strange surroundings. Most of these old folks used to attend church. Of the original 356 churchgoers, 153 still attended, 90 expressed regret at inability to go, and 65 tried to keep in touch with church activities by radio, home Bible-study classes, and calls made by a pastor or church visitor. Women maintained more contacts with church than did men.

[17] Christine M. Morgan, "The Attitudes and Adjustments of Recipients of Old Age Assistance in Upstate and Metropolitan New York," *Archives of Psychology*, No. 214 (1937).

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

What did these people do with the time that used to be taken up by their work? One third found time hanging heavily on their hands. One third had some sort of hobby—gardening, cards, baseball, reading, fishing, and music for men, and sewing, gardening, reading, cards, housekeeping, church work, and music for women. A few had small jobs. Some spent their time walking, sitting in the sun, writing letters, calling on friends, or doing "not much of anything."

*Habits, Attitudes, Sentiments.* In both the cases described at the beginning of this chapter, habits and attitudes of the elderly persons definitely restricted their intercourse with other people. Mr. Lee had been "high and mighty" in his earlier days; in his old age, he was considered "unreasonable." Mrs. Morgan was dominating and critical of her children and grandchildren. However, by no means all the personal traits found in old folks are unpleasant. Our problem is to determine the relative frequency and influence of positive and negative attributes. In working at this, we are not helped much by common observation, for each observer is unduly impressed by the particular instances with which he happens to be familiar. Perhaps those who have intimate dealings with large numbers of old people may be counted on to identify personal traits with greater accuracy and to distinguish the representative from the exceptional.

In a symposium held by the New York State Charities Aid Association in 1937, a number of significant attitudes were emphasized by social workers, physicians, and psychiatrists.[19] One set of attitudes involves the approximate reversal of parent-child relationships, especially as they pertain to dependency and authority. As they grow older, most people find themselves diminishing in vigor, less able to maintain themselves, and, especially in our culture, reduced from a position of family dominance to one of receiving advice and direction from the younger generation. To this

[19] *Mental Hygiene of Old Age*, cited above.

change, they often respond by petulance, bitterness, exaggerated efforts to secure attention, and sometimes by hysterical symptoms. Anxiety over failing strength and increasing symptoms of degeneration is often displayed in demands for attention from family and physician, in pathetic attempts to demonstrate continual usefulness, whereby the old man or woman only gets in the way, and in futile show of authority that is no more. All these forms of behavior are likely to be irritating to children, kinsmen, and other associates. But, unfortunately, we do not know how frequently they occur, or what proportion of elderly persons display other and more acceptable behavior. It is easy to remember that which is annoying and to forget the rest.

The New York study referred to earlier included an inquiry into the attitudes of recipients of old-age assistance.[20] One fourth said they were enjoying their present life "very much," nearly one third "considerably." The period of life on which they looked back with most pleasure was, for one half of them, young adulthood, the years 25 to 45, when they were busy at work, and children were growing. The things they missed the most from younger days were, in order, deceased members of the family, health and physical activity, work, social activities, money, deceased friends, and their own house. Their greatest comforts in old age were, in order, family relationships and friends, material comforts, religion, own home, reverie, good health, work, reading. Their greatest worries in old age were, in order, financial worries and dependence, concern for spouse or family, poor health and physical dependence, inability to work, family relationships and estrangements, and death. Only one fifth reported having any plans they were interested in carrying out now. In general, the factors found to be associated with good adjustment and happiness in old age were good health, pleasant social relations with friends and relatives, hobbies and outside interests, the privacy and independ-

[20] Morgan, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–6.

ence of living in their own homes, and some form of work or useful, worklike activity.

Other observers have mentioned still other attitudes, sentiments, and habits.[21] We take the liberty of summarizing and classifying them in the following rather crude fashion. Positive attitudes and habits, i. e., those which presumably facilitate social participation, include attending to personal needs, performing tasks useful to others, modestly reviewing the past, discussing current affairs, recognizing when not wanted and discreetly withdrawing, finding and showing pleasure in activities which are still open, expressing sympathy with the ambitions and achievements of others as well as with their disappointments and misfortunes. Negative attitudes and habits, i. e., those which presumably impede social participation, include demanding attention, glorifying the past, complaining of discomforts, criticizing members of the younger generation, getting in the way by clumsy efforts to display usefulness, insisting on participating in affairs where not welcome, expressing bitterness, projecting their own ambitions into the lives of their children and grandchildren. But it must be emphasized that we know little about the relative frequency and significance of these various forms of behavior.

*Programs for the Aged.* Most programs for the aged have been limited to their financial and physical needs. Thus, there are public and private institutions where old people with limited funds or none may be cared for during their last years. Many of these institutions, especially the poor farms and almshouses, are rather dreary places. Life within them is monotonous, and contacts with outsiders are limited. However, this is not always or necessarily the case. Old-age assistance, which is really a form of public relief, offers small stipends to persons past 65 (70 in some states) who are without resources of their own and who have no near relatives able to support them. To the extent that this assistance enables old

[21] E. g., Francis Bardwell, *The Adventure of Old Age* (1926).

people to maintain personal contacts, it has sociological as well as economic significance. It has been reported, but not verified, that with the so-called pensions elderly persons have been welcomed into the homes of children and other kinsmen who previously had rejected them. In some cases, the kind of personal service known as social case work is made available to recipients of old-age assistance. But, usually, the administrators either have no conception of needs other than financial and physical or they lack the time to give their clients more than routine attention.

Two agencies offer and demonstrate types of service which would definitely extend the social participation of old people. One is the Old Age Center in San Francisco, where individuals are studied to discover actual and possible interests, and plans are made to provide some activity which will bring attention, appreciation, reciprocal service, and sometimes money. Another is the Oldster Club of New York City, a "social" organization whose membership is limited to persons past sixty. Apparently there is a place for more agencies like these two.

But really adequate provision for social life in old age would go far beyond anything that has yet been done. It would involve some arrangement for "tapering off" in industry, as has been customary in agriculture. It would include training people for their declining years, teaching them what to expect, developing hobbies, investing in annuities, making new friends especially among younger people. All this would require important changes in our folkways. We would have to recognize old age as a natural, but unique, period of life. Perhaps, with the aging of the population, these changes will take place whether they are promoted by organized groups or not.

## Suggested Readings

Bardwell, Francis, *The Adventure of Old Age.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1926. The stories of twenty-four old people in Mas-

sachusetts almshouses, and a general discussion of personal characteristics of the aged.

Epstein, Abraham, *Insecurity, A Challenge to America.* New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1933. Part VII, "Old Age and Invalidity Pensions," is a discussion of economic programs for the aged. Parts I and II deal with the underlying need.

Martin, Lillien J., and de Gruchy, Clare, *Salvaging Old Age.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930. Methods of securing and retaining a "place in the sun" developed at the Old Age Center in San Francisco are discussed in this and the following book.

Martin, Lillien J., and de Gruchy, Clare, *Sweeping the Cobwebs.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933.

*Mental Hygiene in Old Age.* New York: Family Welfare Association of America, 1937. A symposium on physical, mental, and social problems of the aged.

Morgan, Christine Margaret, "The Attitudes and Adjustments of Recipients of Old Age Assistance in Upstate and Metropolitan New York," *Archives of Psychology,* 1937.

Rubinow, I. M. (editor), *The Care of the Aged.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931. Proceedings of the Deutsch Foundation Conference, 1930. Special attention to economic and physical needs of the aged.

Sweeney, Ed, *Poorhouse Sweeney.* New York: Boni and Liveright, Inc., 1927. An autobiographical sketch illustrated by the author.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Write the life history of a personal acquaintance now advanced in years. In this narrative, call special attention to such items as are enumerated in the last part of Chapter 1. Show how membership and activity in social groups changed from childhood to youth, to maturity, to old age. Indicate the part played by physical vigor, mental development and decline, economic status, tradition, and other factors in modifying the person's roles in his social groups. Be sure to disguise the subject's identity, but do not alter any essential facts.

2. Assemble several such life histories and compare them by means of a chart as on page 105 (the factors specified are purely illustrative).

3. From the United States Census, compile the numbers of men and women in your city, county, and state, in 1930, 1920, 1910, and

| Case | Factors Involved in Isolation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Physical* | *Mental* | *Economic* | *Sociological* |
| No. 1 | failing sight | loss of memory | bank failure | institutionalization |
| No. 2 | bad heart | irritability | none | prejudice against electing older men to office |

1900, who were aged, respectively, 75 or older, 65–74, 55–64. Compute the percentages they constituted of the total population, and the rate of increase or decrease in each decade.

4. Inquire of various organizations (e. g., churches, lodges, clubs) what percentage of their members are under 55, from 55 to 64, from 65 to 74, 75 and older.

5. Inquire of various commercial and industrial establishments what percentage of their employees are under 55, from 55 to 64, from 65 to 74, 75 and more. Compare these percentages with the percentages of the total population in your city in the same age classes. With the aid of the United States Census, compare the local data with those for the country as a whole.

6. Give Chapin's "Social Participation Scale" (or some other measure of social participation) to a number of elderly persons. Score and tabulate the returns. Compare averages with those for the class and for any other groups available.

7. Visit an old folk's home, public or private. Note particularly (1) social life within the institution, (2) trips away from the institution, (3) visits of outsiders to the institution, (4) letters and phone calls received, (5) reading material available, and (6) radios and uses made of them.

8. Study the Townsend Plan. What activities does it offer to the aged? What appeals are found which have made it spread so rapidly? If possible, get facts regarding the number of such clubs and number of members. What effect has the movement had to date on the social-participation opportunities of the oldsters? What avenues might the plan open if carried out?

9. If possible, get some data on recipients of old-age assistance in near-by states or communities, particularly regarding family status, interests, health, occupation. Observe the number of elderly persons in newspaper rooms of libraries, and in parks.

# *Chapter 5*

# ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS: THE CRIPPLED AND THE DISABLED

SENESCENCE is a condition which comes upon all except those cut off by premature death. Physical handicaps, on the other hand, strike only a portion of our population. In varying degree, however, the incapacitation which these produce circumscribes the physical activities of the individuals affected and likewise may influence the degree of their social participation. To the extent that physical impairments differentiate the victim from his fellows, they may be regarded as socially handicapping. No one desires to be so afflicted. Those who have had the misfortune to be physically disabled adapt themselves to their circumstances with differing attitudes, ranging from enviable fortitude displayed in overcoming physical limitations to open resentment of their state. We are interested here in examining some phases of the social adjustments which are effected by the crippled. That the physical factor cannot be isolated as the only cause for any limitation in social participation imposed on the afflicted person is self-evident. It is rather a constellation of circumstances interacting with given personality traits which determines ultimately his adjustment to those social groups—family, school, recreational, occupational—with which he inevitably comes in contact. The following stories of a man and a boy, both of whom were crippled, present certain phases of this problem.

**William Mueller**

Born in this country of hard-working, immigrant parents, William Mueller was reared in the tradition of industriousness, thrift, temperance, respect for the father as head of the household, and such virtues as are usually considered heritages of the best of the European peoples. He had a fair education, learned the trade of machinist, worked steadily, lived thriftily. In his twenties, he married a woman of the same ethnic background, industrious as he was; later, he became the proud father of two boys. He started buying a home in a respectable middle-class neighborhood. His life was completely satisfying to him, for all aspects of it fitted so well into his ideas of economic independence, sober habits, industriousness, and mutual respect within the family group, with the father meriting his place as the financial and spiritual head of the household. In general, he was a good neighbor and friend, although for the lazy and shiftless he held a fine scorn, nourishing as he did the feelings that every man should and could be able to take care of himself and his family, and most certainly should not undertake the responsibility of producing dependents if not fully aware of the obligations involved.

At the age of forty-two, however, William Mueller was severely injured in an accident while at work, receiving from a falling piece of machinery, under which he was pinned, serious back and leg injuries which caused immediate, acute suffering and long hospitalization, followed by subsequent periods of hospital care. His prognosis was not favorable; the chances of his walking again were practically nil. Compensation from the company proved inadequate to cover his medical expenses and support his family. In two years, his savings were used up in meeting the usual expenses of the family, providing medical care for his youngest child, and making the payments on his house. His wife was unable to work because of the constant care Mr. Mueller needed and the exercises with which she helped him each day. His oldest boy, an honor student in high school, tried to get work, but jobs were scarce, and his father would not hear of his leaving school. Finally, his funds exhausted and his home lost, Mr. Mueller was forced to move to a lower-rent district, and apply to a welfare agency for help.

When the agency first became acquainted with the family, Mr. Mueller was a broken man, embittered and withdrawn. He would not see his old friends because he felt they pitied him. He would not meet

or respond to any advances of his new neighbors, because he considered them, because of their marginal economic status, of the same shiftless sort that he had always despised and in whose class he had now, ironically enough, been placed. At home, with his patient wife and his lively sons, he was irritable and unreasonable. He considered himself a failure as the head of a family and as a member of society. He made scant efforts to become interested in the vocational rehabilitative program to which his doctor sought to direct him, for he saw in such pursuits only the acknowledgment of his inability to be an independent, self-supporting citizen.

The efforts of the social worker, besides providing some supplement to the scanty family income, were directed toward helping Mr. Mueller face squarely his situation and realize in it the possibilities of his restoration to the status he once had. But that part of the story does not concern us here. Our interest at the moment is in Mr. Mueller's reaction to the physical disability imposed on him.

### Frederick Newton

Frederick is at the present time a pleasant-appearing boy of nineteen, with a friendly smile and a bright, intelligent manner. He is short, undersized, and is decidedly deformed physically, for he is definitely hunchbacked and wears a brace continuously. He is in his junior year in high school, where he obtains grades above average. He studies diligently and is a prime favorite with teachers and pupils. One of the social workers who has been interested in him has said, "He is the kind of person who overcomes handicaps."

Frederick's history shows a series of misfortunes which might have discouraged persons better endowed with intellectual capacities, family affection, and economic resources than Frederick was. His father, a ne'er-do-well member of a stable, self-respecting family, earned its disfavor by his persistent habit of drinking and a marriage of which it disapproved. He died four years after Frederick was born, but the boy did not know him very much, for Mr. Newton was an invalid in a tuberculosis sanatorium for the first two years of the boy's life, before Frederick was sent to the hospital himself with tuberculosis of the spine. Mrs. Newton, who had worked hard to support the family and had never been well herself, died the following year of pernicious anemia.

For ten years, Frederick remained in a hospital or convalescent home

with other sick children. Eight of these years were spent in bed, and for much of the time he was obliged to be on a frame. At the end of this time, his improvement in general health and in his tuberculous condition was such that the hospital sought to make plans for him where he might be in a more normal environment. He was well liked by all in the hospital and noted for his sunny disposition, his avid curiosity, and his perseverance in following all his directions. He had had some instruction in academic subjects but had never attended school prior to his discharge. None of his relatives were able to take him into their home when the institution considered him ready to leave its protective environment. Thus, he was finally placed in a foster home under the supervision of a children's agency.

Frederick's adjustment here was equally good. He applied himself diligently to schoolwork and to making a real place for himself in the foster home and community. Because of his physical condition, he was obliged to attend a special school for crippled children. In three years, he had made up his work and graduated from grammar school. Because schoolwork seemed hard for him, he was advised to enter vocational school rather than the academic high school. He took a series of tests at a vocational center for the handicapped, in which he displayed no marked abilities along any special mechanical line. But he had plans for himself, because he was determined to go to high school, and sought to earn his way. He had previously done very well selling magazines, but the agency worker persuaded him to give this up when he entered high school, for the doctor felt he could not stand the additional physical strain.

Although he has had frequent conferences with his social worker and the placement adviser of the Handicapped Bureau, he is not sure just what he wants to do after high school. He is an avid reader and much more interested in academic subjects than in mechanical trades. He has had to study very hard to achieve the standing he enjoys in high school, but has won several scholarships to aid him. He is active in sports as well: he has long been a player in the local neighborhood baseball team and is an ardent rooter at the big-league games. He gets along well with his schoolmates who seem to enjoy his companionship genuinely. He is interested in music and has shown some originality in creating designs in artwork.

Frederick is very independent. His lack of family ties makes him feel

that he must depend on himself alone for maintenance. He has no desire to be dependent on society. His social worker has questioned whether he is really facing his limitations in refusing to train for a trade, when his intellectual outlook does not seem good enough to warrant the struggle he is making, but Frederick's persistence and success so far augur well for his future. As has been said, "He is a boy who overcomes his handicaps."

The stories of William Mueller and Frederick Newton represent contrasting adaptations of two different individuals to physical disabilities, here found in the form of orthopedic impairments. Any limitations noticed in their adjustments admittedly depended not only on the actual physical conditions but on the emotional reactions of each patient to his condition. In general, the reaction is affected by the age at onset of the incapacity, the intensity or severity of the impairment, and the degree of physical disfigurement. Possibly the early onset of the crippling condition affected Frederick less harmfully than Mr. Mueller, because he had never known the years of freedom of movement and economic independence which the latter experienced before he was stricken. Mr. Mueller, also, was incapacitated to a greater degree than was Frederick, so that his infirmities seemed to press more heavily upon him. On the other hand, Frederick presented a far more pitiable picture in contrast to those around him, with his small, undersized body, and decidedly hunched back. He was always most conscious of this when he bought new clothes and had to have them altered. In many cases, physical limitation may so cut across ideals and life patterns of those afflicted that modifications of such ingrown prejudices occasion much difficulty and, sometimes, inability to adapt to the misfortune. If Mr. Mueller had not felt so keenly the need of every man, especially a family man to be self-supporting in order to be self-respecting, he might have been able to reconcile himself more easily to his loss of the status of wage earner in the family and have taken advantage of re-

habilitative opportunities. If Frederick had not felt so alone in the world and so much a need to prove himself an independent individual, he might have shown less perseverance in his studies.

Obviously, in the two cases cited here, and in all cases of orthopedic impairment, a certain degree of physical immobility exists which defines areas of movement and inherently prohibits participation in certain forms of recreation and in some specific occupations. But though certain avenues of social and vocational activity are permanently barred, alternatives may be found where the physical incapacity is not operative. Examples of individuals who have made successes of their lives even though handicapped are too numerous to mention. The most outstanding example is that of President Roosevelt. The degree of success, if we may use the term, depends, however, on the ability of the afflicted person to recognize the physical limitations and accept substitute activities in which he can participate. Mr. Mueller felt housebound; yet we see daily on our campus a student arriving in a motorized wheel chair, which he parks at the door to the building, and with the aid of crutches takes himself to class. Frederick Newton could never have made any of the school teams, but he did compete ably enough to be acceptable for the neighborhood ball team. It is a frequent sight to see a deformed child playing on the school playground or even engaging in fist fighting as nimbly as the rest. Those with orthopedic impairments may not always be able to drive trucks, to do skilled mechanical work, to engage in a number of occupations involving physical endurance and skillful use of muscles, but the list of occupations in which crippled persons are engaging is ever widening.

Even though physical handicaps per se place some limitations on those afflicted, the thread of our argument is that it is the handicap plus its incorporation into the individual's life which define the extent and character of participation. Fundamentally, we all enjoy being like the others with whom we are in contact;

thus, anything setting us apart causes some anxiety. We are apprehensive about how others may regard us. More than this, we have recognized and formulated certain aims and ambitions for ourselves, certain ideals which we feel are necessary for our existence and which we cannot relinquish easily. Thus it is that physical limitations almost inevitably produce some disturbance in the individual which may aid or strengthen, hamper or weaken, modify or totally change his reactions to the groups in which he finds himself. The basis is largely in feelings of physical inferiority.

Let us examine some of the easily recognizable reactions to a physically handicapping condition. A person may become withdrawn, shy, and retiring rather than making the effort to mingle with others. On the contrary, the invalid may become defiant and demanding, seeking special privileges and special attention from family and community. Aided by a well-meaning but misguided family, a child may become overprotected and dependent, afraid to make the most of what he can do. Medical social-work records are full of examples of these sorts.

Various coincident factors play a part in the extent and direction of the emotional responses. Disabling accident or disease coming after years of free movement, participation in normal activities, and competition on equal terms with others, suddenly puts an end to this freedom and erects barriers to be hurdled. It compels readjustments of physical regime and personal habits, quite different from those faced by persons crippled from birth or early infancy. Many persons, like Mr. Mueller, cannot make this transition. With some diseases, notably rheumatism and arthritis, the development may be a gradual one, interspersed with periods of freedom from the handicap, which may make the condition both easier and more difficult for the victim. As the person grows older, he may accept these limitations and plan for re-employment within his capabilities, or he may fight the encroaching limitations to his freedom and refuse to face the reality of his condition.

But those crippled in infancy face another problem which may be more severe than the foregoing would indicate. With emphasis on the curative aspect of the problem, children are encouraged by family, schoolteachers, nurses, doctors, and others to follow a regime of exercise which has proved beneficial. These exercises cannot be equally effective in all cases, and a child may be buoyed up for years by the hope of becoming normal at some future date. When suddenly or gradually the child realizes he will not be cured and must look forward to a future as a cripple, another difficult time is in store for him. Such reactions have been noted by those studying medical and emotional problems which these children have to face. In regard to the latter, some who have worked with the victims of cerebral palsy, where the crippling is most frequently irreparable, have said: "At about twelve years of age, and through their teens, there comes a period of great emotional conflict due to the realization that they must face an adult life which is different than their previous hopes and expectations, and very different than the lives of their associates." [1]

To summarize, we may say that the adjustment of a crippled person to the individuals and groups with whom he associates is directed by his ability to adapt himself to his physical limitations. The degree of physical impairment may be diagnosed with more than reasonable accuracy and treated medically with more or less predictable results. The degree of emotional adjustment varies with social and personality factors of each individual and defies accurate prediction.

*Number and Distribution of the Crippled.* The crippled are less easily counted than the aged. It is impossible at the present time to give exact figures or more than an approximate estimate of the total number of persons in the United States who fall in

[1] Gladys Rogers and Leah Thomas, "Emotional Adjustments of the Spastic Child," *The Crippled Child*, 16 (1938), 62. By permission of the National Society for Crippled Children of the United States of America, Inc.

this category, mainly because there is no general agreement on what constitutes a cripple. Different interpretations have been used in attempts by several states to survey a whole or a portion of their population in regard to disabling handicaps. Many of these statistics include more than orthopedic impairments, covering the cardiacs, the tuberculous, the blind, and the deaf. We have endeavored to limit our discussion, in so far as possible, to orthopedic defects.

In attempting to achieve a uniform system of counting crippled children, the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, meeting in 1930, offered for consideration the following definition:

> A crippled child is one, under twenty-one years of age, who by reason of congenital or acquired defects of development, disease or wound, is, or may be reasonably expected to become, deficient in the use of his body or limbs (an orthopedic cripple), including hare lip, cleft palate, and some other handicaps yielding to plastic surgery, and excluding physical difficulties wholly of sight, hearing, or speech, and those affecting the heart primarily, and also excluding serious mental or moral abnormalities unless found in conjunction with orthopedic defects.[2]

This definition, although excluding certain physical impairments where use of the body or limbs is not affected, does include children with cleft palates and harelips. The National Health Survey of 1935–1936, under the auspices of the National Institute of Health, paid particular attention to orthopedic impairment which they defined as "a permanent state in which the individual lacks the natural use of some portion of the skeletal-neuro-muscular system." [3] No standard definition has been accepted by all those counting or working with the crippled.

[2] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Handicapped Child* (1933), vol. IV-B, p. 119. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930.

[3] "The Prevalence and Causes of Orthopedic Impairments," *National Health Survey, 1935–1936* (U. S. Public Health Service Bulletin, No. 4), p. 3.

A White House Conference subcommittee also examined carefully a number of detailed studies which had been made in Cleveland, New York, New Jersey, and Michigan. On the basis of these findings, and comparison with census data, it arrived at an estimate of three crippled children per 1,000 of the general population. Applying this ratio to the 1930 census figures, the committee estimated that the number of crippled children in the United States was 368,325.[4] As many of the data used were from earlier studies, and because much more concentrated and consistent effort has been directed toward locating crippled children since 1930, subsequent research may revise this estimate.

Figures for adults are more baffling. No estimate to match the thoroughness of the White House Conference subcommittee's for children has been made. Perhaps the most complete statistics to date are those given by the National Health Survey on the prevalence of orthopedic impairments. The data for this survey were collected by field representatives in eight cities, canvassing some 800,000 families, including 2,800,000 persons, both adults and children. From the figures gathered, a rate per 1,000 persons was calculated, and the majority of figures quoted by the survey are given in terms of such rates rather than in absolute numbers. The "orthopedic impairment" found by this study involved 312,686 persons, white and colored, or a rate of 20.2 per 1,000 population.[5] This survey further estimated "that two out of every 100 persons in the United States have a permanent orthopedic impairment of such a serious nature that they are considered to be partially or completely crippled, deformed or paralyzed."[6] Of these, 500,000 were estimated to be incapacitated.[7]

This same study gives us some idea of the age and sex of the

[4] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, pp. 133–4.

[5] *National Health Survey*, p. 18.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

[7] "Incapacity" was used to denote long-term disability as contrasted with "disabling illness." See note 2, p. 14, of *Survey*.

## Table 4

### RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO SEX, AGE, AND CERTAIN IMPORTANT CAUSES [a]

312,686 White and Colored Persons in 8 Cities, National Health Survey, 1935–1936

| CAUSE | RATE PER 1,000 PERSONS BY SEX AND AGE | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | BOTH SEXES | | | | MALE | | | | FEMALE | | | |
| | *All ages* | *Under 15* | *15–64 years* | *65 & over* | *All ages* | *Under 15* | *15–64 years* | *65 & over* | *All ages* | *Under 15* | *15–64 years* | *65 & over* |
| All causes | 20.2 | 5.5 | 21.1 | 67.6 | 28.8 | 6.3 | 32.1 | 92.2 | 12.2 | 4.7 | 11.4 | 49.3 |
| Accidental, all | 12.4 | 1.4 | 13.9 | 38.2 | 20.4 | 1.8 | 24.0 | 59.8 | 5.1 | 1.0 | 4.9 | 21.5 |
| Occupational | 5.9 | — | 7.0 | 17.6 | 11.6 | — | 13.8 | 37.4 | .8 | — | 1.0 | 1.9 |
| Home | 2.9 | .9 | 3.0 | 10.2 | 3.3 | 1.0 | 3.6 | 8.7 | 2.6 | .7 | 2.4 | 11.4 |
| Public place except auto | 1.7 | .4 | 1.7 | 5.5 | 2.4 | .5 | 2.8 | 6.3 | .9 | .2 | .7 | 4.8 |
| Auto | 1.2 | .1 | 1.4 | 3.8 | 1.8 | .2 | 2.1 | 5.1 | .7 | .1 | .7 | 2.8 |
| Unspecified | .7 | [b] | .8 | 1.1 | 1.3 | [b] | 1.7 | 2.3 | .1 | [b] | .1 | .6 |
| Disease, all | 6.7 | 2.3 | 6.3 | 28.9 | 7.3 | 2.7 | 7.1 | 31.8 | 6.1 | 1.9 | 5.7 | 27.3 |
| Apoplexy and paralysis except infantile | 1.9 | .2 | 1.4 | 13.4 | 2.1 | .3 | 1.7 | 15.7 | 1.6 | .2 | 1.2 | 11.6 |
| Infantile paralysis | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | .2 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.6 | .5 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.3 | — |
| Rheumatism and allied diseases | 1.0 | [b] | .9 | 5.4 | .6 | [b] | .6 | 3.8 | 1.2 | — | 1.1 | 6.6 |
| All other diseases | 2.4 | .6 | 2.6 | 9.9 | 3.1 | .8 | 3.2 | 11.8 | 2.1 | .4 | 2.1 | 9.1 |
| Congenital | 1.1 | 1.8 | .9 | .5 | 1.1 | 1.8 | 1.0 | .6 | 1.0 | 1.8 | .8 | .5 |

[a] *National Health Survey*, p. 18.
[b] Less than .05 per 1,000 persons.

crippled persons found. Since the statistics were compiled for only three age groups—those under 15, 15 to 64 years, and over 64 years of age—there is no way of comparing these figures with the estimate obtained by the White House Conference. The National Health Survey estimated that 210,000 persons under 15 years of age had orthopedic impairments, which is 158,000 less than the former estimate. The White House Conference subcommittee's, however, included children up to the age of 21, which explains the discrepancy at least partially. Naturally, the largest groups of cripples fell between the ages of 15 and 64, an estimated 1,900,000 persons. The males far outnumbered the females in each age group but more significantly for the middle age group, 15 to 64. Seventy per cent of the total number of cripples were males, and nearly 80 per cent of those between the ages of 15 and 64 were males.[8]

Looking at this fact another way, we can see that the chances of a boy's becoming disabled are far greater than of a girl's, owing in part to the great hazard of industrial accidents. These figures, which show rates per 1,000 members of the population by age and sex, indicate the proportion of all cripples who are injured accidentally compared with those whose impairments result from disease. Some figures on origin of disability of persons known to the various state offices of the Vocational Rehabilitation Bureau show 50 per cent due to accidental causes, 42 per cent due to disease, and 8 per cent caused by congenital defects.[9] The diseases strike at all ages of the population, but the most insidious enemy, infantile paralysis, strikes chiefly during the early years of life and takes a greater toll than any other disease.

*Family Relations of the Crippled.* We are at a distinct loss in not having much information regarding the family life and ad-

[8] *National Health Survey*, p. 1.

[9] *Vocational Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped* (U. S. Office of Education Bulletin No. 190 [1937]), p. 24. These figures are not limited to crippled persons, but include a few blind, deaf, and cardiacs.

justments of crippled persons. Some figures are available, showing at any one time the number of such persons in institutions. In fact, hospitals and special schools for these persons are usually filled to capacity at all times. But such facts do not give us any knowledge of the length of time the persons remain in the institution as contrasted with the amount of time spent in the family group. Nor would these figures supply us with information regarding the nature of the relationships of the person in his home. Is he made much of, protected, and shielded? Is he ignored, resented, and pushed about? Is he treated as the other children or adults in the household are treated?

Some data are available, however, on the marital situation of the crippled. A study was made of 1,046 applicants at twelve employment agencies in New York, between October 19 and November 14, 1925. The marital status of 1,032 was known: 605, or 58 per cent, were single, and the remaining 427, or 41 per cent, were or had been married.[10] This study included some who were not crippled, according to our definition. A subsequent study of disabled men, most of whom were crippled, yielded similar findings, as shown in Table 5. Of 4,404 individuals covered by this study, 62 per cent were single, 29 per cent were married, and 6 per cent were either divorced or separated.[11] These data were gathered from the application blanks made out by the applicants at a bureau especially established for handicapped persons, and included individuals served over a period of thirteen years, from 1917 to 1930. These figures are compared with those of the population at large as given in the 1930 census. Unfortunately, more specific data as to age of the applicants are not given, but the study itself points out that 26 per cent of the single group might be justifiably eliminated, since they are 21 years of age or under and there-

[10] Mary La Dame, *Securing Employment for the Handicapped* (1927), p. 100.

[11] Roy N. Anderson, *The Disabled Man and His Vocational Adjustment* (1932), p. 8.

Table 5

MARITAL STATUS OF MALE APPLICANTS TO SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT BUREAU COMPARED WITH THE POPULATION AT LARGE

| *Marital Status* | *Applicants to Employment Bureau*[a] | | *1930 Population* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Per Cent* |
| Single | 2,706 | 62 | 34.1 |
| Married | 1,270 | 29 | 60.0 |
| Widowed, divorced, or separated | 277 | 6 | 5.7 |
| Not stated | 151 | 3 | 0.2 |
| Total | 4,404 | 100 | 100.0 |

[a] Data from Roy Anderson, *The Disabled Man and His Vocational Adjustment* (1932), p. 8. The study includes 4,404 men seeking placement, from 1917 to 1930. Data used by permission of the author.

[b] Fifteenth Census, *Population,* vol. 2, p. 838. The census figures do not record "separations."

fore unlikely to be married.[12] Even with the elimination of this number, the proportion of single men is higher than the corresponding figures for the population at large.

These two sets of figures would certainly imply that crippled persons do not enter into matrimony with the same frequency as others, for the differential is striking. Whether the handicap makes the victim unacceptable to the other sex as a mate, or whether his response rules out matrimony as far as the given individual is concerned, we cannot say. From our point of view, it would seem, however, that physical handicaps do present a barrier to marriage.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* The National Health Survey of Orthopedic Impairments, previously referred to, inquired

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

into the economic status of the persons included in the course of its investigation. They arrived at the somewhat startling conclusion that "these impairments are found almost three times as often among persons on relief as among persons living in families with annual incomes of $3,000 or over, more than twice as often among the population with family incomes of less than $1,000 per year (not on relief) and over one and one-half times as often among those in the income group $1,000 to $2,000. Moreover, the incapacitated cases are more highly concentrated in the relief and low income groups than are the total cases." [13] This raises a question of the extent to which such impairments may affect the earning capacity of the individual victim. The loss of earning power, together with the cost of medical care required, may become such a strain as to compel recourse to some public or private agency for financial assistance.

Certain occupations are definitely barred to persons with specified handicaps. For example, a man with a paralyzed arm cannot drive a truck or become a carpenter or a machinist. Insurance companies have further imposed some limitations regarding the employment of handicapped individuals who are not considered good risks. Thus, the disabled do not compete industrially on the same terms as their more normal fellows. This fact is re-emphasized in the establishment of special vocational centers or bureaus for the placement of the physically disabled.

One of the greatest factors influencing employability is that injured persons are frequently not trained for anything other than the work which they had been doing. Pushed out of skilled tasks, they are apt to find only semiskilled or unskilled jobs available, unless their education has been such as to fit them for professional work. In both employment studies referred to, the educational attainments of the applicants were limited, for the most part, to grammar-school attendance.

[13] *National Health Survey*, p. 1.

An examination of earnings of the 4,404 men analyzed in the New York Employment Center study showed a range of from $5 to $64 per week after disablement. The median earnings ranged from $15 to $19, with the first quartile falling in the $10-to-$14 classification and the third in the $20-to-$24 classification.[14] These figures indicate that the great majority of the handicapped individuals earned between $10 and $25 per week. These earnings covered a number of years and were not adjusted for changes in the general wage scale, so that average wages were probably lower. The writer comments in regard to his findings: "When compared with the average weekly earnings of the normal worker they were found to be slightly less than the weekly wage received by workers in manufacturing industries, but to approximate the wages received by unskilled workers, a more nearly comparable group." [15]

To offset the barriers preventing the handicapped from achieving the same employment opportunities as others, training programs have been inaugurated under both private and public auspices, whose main purpose is to equip the maimed person with the means of earning a livelihood. Considerable success in these ventures has been claimed by those working in the field. The efforts toward vocational rehabilitation carried on under Federal-state auspices show tangible improvement in the financial condition of those trained under their supervision as compared with the status prior to the training period. These figures, given in Table 6, show that total earnings of a group of 1,000 persons, listed as having been retrained from 1921 through 1924, increased from $332,132 per year to $1,035,780 per year, or an increase of approximately 200 per cent. Subsequently, the depression has diminished the earnings as well as the opportunities for the physically handicapped in industry and on most of the work-relief projects.

*Programs for the Crippled and the Disabled.* We have had but

[14] Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

Table 6

EARNINGS OF 1,000 REHABILITATED PERSONS[a]

| *Time of Recording Data* | *Total Earnings per Year* |
|---|---|
| Prior to rehabilitation | $ 332,132 |
| Immediately after rehabilitation | 1,035,780 |
| 1927 | 1,243,301 |
| 1931 | 929,702 |

[a] *Vocational Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped* (U.S. Office of Education [1937]), p. 30.

scanty data to present regarding the limitations which are evident in the social participation of the physically handicapped. Nevertheless, we can see a widespread awareness of these restrictions in the programs initiated to equalize their opportunities. To date, interested persons and public agencies have made three attacks on the problem of the crippled and their place in society. These may be summarized as:

1. *Medical*—including preventive measures, adequate medical treatment, and aftercare or follow-up with the objective of minimizing the physical handicap, if not overcoming it;

2. *Educational*—provision of opportunities to all those afflicted, for both general and special training, to the same extent as are available to those not handicapped;

3. *Vocational Rehabilitative*—embracing all measures for retraining and preparing the adult cripple to enter industry.

For cripples of all ages, the present century, more particularly the last two decades, has seen remarkable strides in medical understanding of orthopedic cases and in methods of treatment. A stimulus to work in this direction was provided in the large number of cripples left after the World War. In the hospitals devoted to these cases, as well as in other hospitals and clinics, experimenta-

tion in surgery, use of artificial limbs, and advances in hydrotherapy and physiotherapy have advanced the status of the cripple far beyond that of any previous period.[16] All that the physician, therapist, and surgeon can do to enable the cripple to participate on a more equal footing with those not handicapped is an advance well meriting the social approval which it unquestioningly has. Accompanying the progress on the curative side has come a realization of the role which prevention can play, particularly emphasized by the National Safety Council, and the mitigation of end results by prompt and adequate treatment.

The next logical step following this technical advance is to make the services thus developed available to more of the crippled, particularly those in regions remote from medical facilities. So strong has the desire been to put opportunities for medical treatment within the reach of a greater number of those afflicted that a general movement on the part of lay, professional, and government agencies alike has worked toward increasing availability of resources for the crippled. Particularly the crippled children have appealed to the general public. Service clubs and lodges have been active in establishing hospitals or providing money for camps, hospitalization, clinics, braces, and the like for those who would not otherwise have the funds for such services.

Realization of the benefits of this medical work and of the fact that many children, particularly in rural areas, did not know of, or if they did were frequently unable to partake of, the opportunities offered, both operated in motivating the provisions forming Part 2 of Title V of the Social Security Act of 1935. Prior to this Act, however, the majority of the states had taken cognizance of crippled children's needs in a variety of ways. In thirty-seven states, in 1934, some provision had been made for a state depart-

[16] Frederick Watson, *Civilization and the Cripple* (1930), gives a splendid picture of the growing interest in, and improvement of, treatment for the cripple.

ment or commission to locate crippled children and provide hospital care, for the development of diagnostic and follow-up clinics, and for aftercare of some sort. The agencies responsible, the extent of the program, and the amount appropriated for financing it varied. The Social Security Act merely re-emphasized the need of the children, by including provisions for such service and by appropriating a sum for grants to the states on the basis of matching funds. The state plans, to be approved by the Federal Children's Bureau, were to embrace measures "to extend and improve (especially in rural areas and in areas of economic distress), as far as practicable under the conditions in such State, services for locating crippled children and for providing medical, surgical, corrective, and other services and care, for children who are crippled or who are suffering from conditions which lead to crippling." [17]

All of these medical approaches are aimed at the alleviation of pain, reducing the extent of the physical limitations imposed by the disease or accident, and promoting, as nearly as possible, normal functioning of all affected parts, through modern scientific achievements. The underlying assumption implicit in these efforts is that a certain proportion of emotional satisfaction must inevitably accompany improvement in the bodily conditions.

A recognition that medical care is not enough and does not solve the problem for the crippled child led to the second attack on the problem—the educational. Provision of educational opportunities for the crippled has been of prime concern to many. Owing to the fact that many cripples cannot go to regular school or need more attention than can be given them there, special schools have been erected for the crippled, chiefly in urban communities. Here, specially trained teachers are in charge. Usually, opportunity is provided for corrective treatment and exercises. A sense of security is given the children by the equalizing of competitive position,

[17] *Social Security in America* (Social Security Board [1937]), p. 296.

which is not possible in a school where most of the children are not handicapped physically. However, certain hazards are involved in keeping a child, only partially handicapped, too long in a special school, in that his initiative is dulled, and he does not receive enough incentive in this protected environment for the problems he will have to face in later life. Many hospitals for crippled children maintain special teachers, and formal instruction in the three R's is often part of the hospital regime.

With children of working age and with those adult cripples who have had employment, the educational phase of their condition has been vigorously attacked in the various programs for vocational rehabilitation. The underlying aim of these attempts has been to prepare the handicapped individual to compete in certain occupations on the same terms as other persons in the community. By a careful study of his education, training, personality, desires, aptitudes, and physical limitations, the person is aided in being fitted for an occupation in which he can earn a living and in the performance of which he may derive some personal satisfaction aside from the weekly pay check. For those crippled who have not previously been self-supporting members of a community, the vocational-training procedure offers an outlet for social participation in a work group on terms of equal competition at the same wages, which subordinates or eliminates possible feelings of incompetency and economic liability.

Federal interest along this line was directed first at alleviating the condition of war cripples, but it later included those otherwise disabled. Prior to 1920, when the first Federal law regarding vocational rehabilitation was passed, twelve states had enacted legislation, but only six had actually appropriated funds for the purpose. The Federal act of 1920 made appropriations for vocational rehabilitation to cover "all persons who are vocationally handicapped by reason of a physical defect or infirmity, whether congenital or

acquired by accident, injury or disease, and who are or may be expected to be, totally or partially incapacitated for remunerative occupations." [18]

This statute was revised in 1924 and 1932 and again by the Social Security Act of 1935, which provided for larger appropriations but did not otherwise affect the former act. Since the 1920 legislation, forty-eight states, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico have established public services for the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons. Those who are promoting this vocational rehabilitation program are not unaware of the "box-office" appeal involved in lessening the load of unemployable dependents by making them self-supporting members of the community. The Federal government has been emphasizing the future saving to the nation in actual dollars as well as the benefit derived from a work group mentally more healthy.

By this vocational-rehabilitation program, an economic differential is reduced, which might operate to exclude the crippled person from becoming self-supporting and enjoying the associations with a work group. The sheltered workshop has been frequently adopted as a substitute for those who can never be trained or retrained to enter industry on any competitive basis. Although costly to operate because of the heavy overhead expenses, such workshops provide places where the maimed can carry on some sort of handwork and receive for their labors wages usually figured on the per diem basis. Many of these special workshops have been provided for the blind as well as the crippled. Goods made under these rather special conditions are sold by appealing to the charitable impulses of the general public, as this type of effort to become self-supporting has long been held in high esteem. Economically, the workshops are unsound and must be heavily subsidized with public or private funds to permit operation at all. Their chief claim for ap-

[18] *Vocational Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped* (U. S. Office of Education [1937]), p. 5.

proval lies in the emotional satisfactions afforded the individual, whereby he is able to earn some money, and occupies his time healthfully, to the discouragement of self-pity and morbid introspection.

Throughout the state programs considered desirable by the Social Security Board, the need for social service for the persons handicapped is recognized. This need has been felt and fulfilled in the work of most private agencies as well as by those engaged in the educational work with these persons. That crippled children and adults have the same natural desires for recreation, sports, companionship, educational and occupational advantages as persons not so handicapped is a truism long since recognized, but it is less easy to understand the many forms which frustrations may take, and how to overcome these. All the approaches to the problem of the cripple which aim to minimize the physical disability, the educational differences, and the occupational privileges are fundamental assets in promoting social and emotional adjustments. But further care and study is necessary, presumably on an individual basis, as it is the total circumstances of the person which help determine the specific obstacles which will defeat him or which he may in part conquer.

## Suggested Readings

Anderson, Roy N., *The Disabled Man and His Vocational Adjustment.* New York: Institute for the Crippled and Disabled, 1932. A study of the types of jobs held by 4,404 orthopedic cases in relation to specific disabilities.

Hathway, Marion, *The Young Cripple and His Job.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928. Includes case studies and statistics dealing with the training and industrial histories of 150 young crippled persons.

Hood, R. C., "Crippled Children," *Social Work Year Book, 1937,* pp. 112–17. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Baker, Edith M., "Crippled Children," *Social Work Year Book, 1939,* pp. 101–107.

Two excellent summaries of incidence, causes, and programs of treatment for crippled children, with bibliographies.

Kessler, Henry H., *The Crippled and the Disabled.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1935. A comprehensive examination of many aspects of the life of the crippled.

Lowry, Lawson G., "The Reaction of Physical Handicap upon Personality," *National Conference of Social Work,* 1925, pp. 324–330. A psychiatrist explains direct and indirect effects of disability on personality.

United States Office of Education, *Vocational Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped,* Vocational Educational Bulletin No. 190, Washington, D.C., 1936. Examination of problems in retraining the handicapped to make them vocational "fits." Stresses work of the Federal bureaus.

United States Public Health Service, *The National Health Survey, 1935–1936,* "The Prevalence and Causes of Orthopedic Impairments," Bulletin, No. 4, Washington, D.C., 1938. Data on incidence and cause of orthopedic impairments among 800,000 families in eight cities.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Handicapped Child.* New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933, vol. IV-B, "The Crippled," pp. 119–193. Data assembled for the 1930 White House Conference dealing with the nature and distribution of crippling conditions and programs for dealing with them.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Write the life history of a personal acquaintance who has experienced some orthopedic impairment. Describe his social participation in the manner previously outlined. If the crippling condition was not congenital or acquired in early childhood, note the differences between his social participation before and after onset of the handicap. Compare his social relationships with those of a sibling (brother or sister) or other person who is not crippled. Be careful to disguise the subject's identity.

2. Assemble several such life histories and compare them by means of a chart as on page 129 (items are purely illustrative).

3. Give Chapin's "Social Participation Scale" (or some other measure of social participation) to a number of crippled persons. Score and tabulate returns, paying due attention to age, sex, and time of onset. Com-

| Case | Nature of handicap | Age at onset | Present age | Sex | Present or last school grade | Vocation | Interest groups | Cultural activities |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. 1 | club foot | birth | 13 | male | 6 | student | Boy Scouts | fishing<br>harmonica |
| No. 2 | infantile paralysis | 10 | 19 | female | 9 | typist | none | knitting<br>radio |

pare averages with those for the class or some other group. (Note: It would be best to compare cripples with others as much like them as possible except in disability; i. e., they should be alike as to sex, age, ethnic group, socioeconomic status.)

4. From the appropriate department of your state government, secure available data (bulletins, reports, press releases) concerning crippled and disabled persons in the state. Abstract the data and present to the class.

5. Is there any organization—public or private, medical, educational, or social service—in your city or county, which cares for crippled children or adults? If so, try to secure a report, arrange an interview, or plan a visit. (Note concerning visits to institutions: People do not like to be looked at as though they were animals in a zoo. Spend less time viewing buildings and equipment than in talking with staff and possibly patients. Prepare questions in advance.) Seek particularly to learn about the social participation of patients—past, present, and prospective.

6. Secure reports from your state organization for crippled children. Note programs which directly affect the individual's social participation, as schooling, recreation, camping, and similar activities.

7. Inquire of various organizations whether they have any members who are crippled. If so, what are their roles; i. e., do they hold office, serve on committees, take part in programs, and the like?

8. Inquire of various commercial and industrial establishments whether they have any employees who are crippled. Were they employed before or after onset of the handicap? What kinds of work do they do? How does their pay compare with that of employees who are not crippled? If any firm does not employ crippled persons, ask whether it would be willing to do so. What objections are raised—inability to do the work, accident hazard, objection of other employees?

9. Inquire of the Federal Employment Office and Rehabilitation Office as to the number of crippled persons who are seeking employment, kind of employment secured, nature of handicap, retraining necessary.

10. Consider some of the cripples described in history and fiction, such as Byron, Philip Carey of Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, and Quasimodo in Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Note adjustments to their own condition, social relationships, and amount of social participation.

# *Chapter 6*

# SENSORY DEFECTS: THE BLIND AND THE DEAF

PROBABLY the most outstanding illustration of early isolation from family and other groups and subsequent vital participation in the life around her is found in the story of Helen Keller. Because of loss of sight and hearing at a very early age, she was deprived of the usual means of contact with those about her. The struggle which she made to achieve release from the bonds imposed by her physical limitations is one of inspiration to all.

### Helen Keller [1]

Helen Keller was born in Tuscumbia, Alabama, in 1880, of a prominent Southern family. For nineteen months, she developed rapidly, a healthy, happy child. Then came a blighting illness described as "acute congestion of the stomach and brain." Sight and hearing were completely lost, though the sense of smell remained. Before the sickness, Helen was learning to talk; afterward, practically all speech was lost through disuse and the failure of her sense of hearing. Some memories of these early months were certainly retained, but the little girl presently became as one born blind and deaf.

Miss Keller does not remember when she first realized that she was different from other people, but it was before her teacher, Miss Sullivan, came to her in 1887. She noticed that her mother and friends did not use signs, but "talked with their mouths." Sometimes little Helen would stand between two persons who were talking and touch their lips. She could not understand and was vexed. She moved her own lips and

[1] Adapted from Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life* (1904), by permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., with supplementary data from another of her books, *The World I Live In* (1914).

made frantic gestures, but, of course, without gaining entrance into the conversation. This made her so angry at times that she kicked and screamed. The desire to express herself grew, and her pantomimic gestures, with which she had made her simple wants known, became less and less adequate. She felt as if invisible hands were holding her.

For her contacts with other persons, Helen Keller was largely dependent upon the sense of touch. Though she used it to great advantage, she quickly discovered its limitations. She found that it was impossible for her to distinguish the tone of another's voice; she thus missed those finer shades of meaning which are conveyed by the manner of speaking rather than by the particular words used. Likewise, she could not watch the expressions on a speaker's face, "and a look is often the very soul of what one says." In new situations, instead of getting a general impression of the whole and then resolving it into its parts, she had first to feel the parts and then assemble them in her mind.

It was through the sense of touch that Miss Keller learned eventually to speak. She not only felt the positions of lips, tongue, and vocal cords, but also sensed the vibrations of the voice. From these sensations, she could sometimes understand what was being said. Closely akin to these experiences was her ability to distinguish vibrations of the air or jarring of the floor associated with different sounds and motions. By these, she said she knew whether a carpenter was using a saw or a plane; she identified the noise of a train, the din of city streets. By them, she also recognized her friends and even caught a glimpse of their feelings. Miss Sullivan thought that she was familiar with the muscular variations associated with the emotions, and thus knew from tactual contact whether those about her were happy or sad. This sensitiveness to vibrations enabled Miss Keller to communicate with others by tapping the floor with her foot, using the telegraphic alphabet.

In the beginning, Miss Keller had to learn to live happily with other people and particularly to curb her outbursts of temper. However, she was not entirely lacking in sociability, even in those days. She liked to have people about and to go visiting. She was fond of dress and finery. She made friends readily and remembered them without difficulty. After she learned the significance of word signs, she wanted to teach the letters to everyone she met. She also had a strong impulse to repeat what was told to her. At the first Christmas celebration after Miss Sullivan's

coming, Helen took great delight in the gifts for other children and thoroughly enjoyed sharing the affair with them.

In many ways, the systematic education of Helen Keller had much broader foundations than did that of Laura Bridgman, the first blind and deaf person whose educational progress was systematically studied. The latter was a sickly child who had little share in the life of the household; the former was in the kitchen, about the farm buildings, playing with the child of the colored cook, and having about as varied experiences as could come to an untutored little blind-deaf girl. But there were serious limitations, as we have already noted.

It was through reading Dickens' *American Notes* that the Keller family learned about Laura Bridgman and what had been done for her at the Perkins Institution for the Blind in Boston. So Captain Keller wrote to see if it would be possible to secure an instructor for his little girl. After some months, Miss Sullivan came to them.

Miss Sullivan herself had become almost totally blind very early in life and had been educated at the Perkins Institution. Later her sight was partially restored, but this personal experience undoubtedly helped her in teaching Helen Keller. Miss Sullivan also had the advantage of living for six years in the house with Laura Bridgman. After she had been employed to teach Helen Keller, she read Dr. Howe's reports and notes on his work with Laura Bridgman as a basis for the task she was about to undertake.

It is not possible for us to detail the various elements which entered into Miss Keller's education; we shall have to content ourselves with a few samples. One of Miss Sullivan's first steps was to give Helen a doll and spell the word doll into her hand. Helen repeated this "in monkeylike imitation," as she did the naming of other objects, but not for some time did she discover that everything has a name, and that these word signs corresponded to the various objects and activities of her experience. Once that was achieved, progress was rapid.

Miss Sullivan decided to act as Helen's nurse, not only to be spared the bother of a servant, but especially to be able to teach the girl at odd moments. Indeed, this informality was fundamental in her method. Moreover, she talked to Helen as she would to any other child, except that the medium of communication had to be the hands instead of the ears. Wherever possible she made a game of the lesson. As a result,

Helen was eager to learn. First came the acquiring of a vocabulary for conversation, then counting, reading raised type, writing braille, and so forth. Much use was made of the life about her, the plants, the animals, the people; all instruction was in terms of experiences that were real to the girl.

After a year of home teaching, Helen was taken on a visit to Boston and the Perkins Institution for the Blind. After that, she traveled more or less and spent most of her winters in the North. In 1890, she learned to speak, and later attended a school for the deaf in New York in order to improve her voice. She visited Niagara Falls, took in the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893, and, in 1896, entered a girls' school in Cambridge to prepare for Radcliffe. With Miss Sullivan's help, she completed the work and successfully passed her examinations. In 1900, she entered Radcliffe College, from which subsequently she was graduated.

Some of the difficulties under which she labored are thus described in her own words. "For a while, indeed, I had to copy my Latin in braille, so that I could recite with the other girls. My instructors soon became sufficiently familiar with my imperfect speech to answer my questions readily and correct mistakes. I could not make notes in class or write exercises; but I wrote all my compositions and translations at home on my typewriter. Each day Miss Sullivan went to the classes with me and spelled into my hand with infinite patience all that the teachers said. In study hours she had to look up new words for me and read and reread notes and books I did not have in raised print. The tedium of that work is hard to conceive."

Helen Keller is widely known. Not only has she learned to live successfully with other people in the world about her, but she has participated fully in the life of the larger society. She is well known as a lecturer, and has contributions to make in her own right on a variety of subjects. Naturally, she is particularly interested in promoting educational opportunities for those who are handicapped by either blindness or deafness, and is a living symbol of what may be accomplished in overcoming these.

Fortunately, few persons suffer the double deprivation of eyesight and hearing. The loss of either of these senses, however, is sufficient to impose severe limitations on the individual in the extent and nature of his relationships with others, on which his whole scheme of life depends. The two stories quoted below in-

dicate some of the difficulties which were encountered by the persons described, and their reactions to the physical handicap.

### Charles Jason

When he was eighteen years old, Charles Jason left his home in the country to look for the vaunted opportunities of city life. He was a most likeable lad, favored with good looks, a pleasing personality, intelligence, a fair education. Moreover, he was ambitious to work and get ahead. Once arrived, he had no trouble in securing work through the aid of a friend in the shipping department of a large store. His pleasant, engaging manner won him many friends, and, unused to the freedom of life in a big city, for a time, he went out with some of the more lively of his fellows of not too high moral standards. His "wild oats" sown, and promoted to a clerk's job which he enjoyed very much, he began to steady himself, withdrew from his erstwhile companions, took some night courses, forged ahead. At the age of twenty-six, he married a very attractive young girl who had also come to the city, but rather more to escape her home than for the lures of city life.

Mrs. Jason came from a large family in very straitened circumstances. Her parents had not been happily mated, and her father left her mother to struggle with the raising of a large brood of children. The growing-up process was difficult for all. Money was scarce; all were expected to work; much quarreling occurred among the children. Mrs. Jason had been violently unhappy there and had made up her mind she wanted something better from life than she had found in her parental home. She had always been a slender, very attractive person, blessed with an innate sense of good taste, and had felt herself somewhat above her meager surroundings. When she met the handsome young clerk with his ready money and his winning ways, she was much taken with him and married him after a brief courtship, as he seemed the answer to her unexpressed wants. He was earning a good salary and could give her the things for which she had yearned. Charles Jason proved a devoted, eager lover and husband. He tried to do everything for his pretty wife, and she easily slipped into the role he created, a dependent person, accepting the gifts he lavished upon her, spending freely the money which came so effortlessly. Three children were born. Business continued to flourish. Mr. Jason's earnings were regular and ample. The family continued to live up to his income.

The depression brought the first blow. Business dwindled, Mr. Jason's salary was cut, and he did not work full time. The family was forced to retrench in its manner of living. Suddenly, with little warning, Mr. Jason's sight began to fail. His vision decreased very rapidly, so that soon he was virtually blind. He learned that his blindness was caused by a syphilitic condition which would be progressive, and nothing which medical skill could do would help. The verdict was only too true. His remaining vision quickly left him, and he had to face a future with a wife who was completely dependent on him, and three children under twelve.

Mr. Jason's reaction was one of a drowning man to whom there was no ship in sight, no bit of floating wood about or helping hand extended. At first, he would not recognize his physical limitation. Other persons had had their sight restored. He would do the same. Explanations of the physiology of his condition meant nothing to him. He tried various advertised remedies, special glasses reputed to restore vision, in an effort to cure his condition. Nor did his family aid him at this time. Mrs. Jason's dependent attitude, fostered for so many years by her indulgent husband, made her feel somewhat petulant with him because he was denying her support. She could not reconcile the reality of blindness with the facts of day-by-day living. Then, too, the manner in which blindness was occasioned seemed utterly incomprehensible to her, and she reproached her husband because of his condition. The children's reactions were those of withdrawal from their father. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Jason for some time could see any way out of their dilemma other than accepting financial assistance from the community, because they did not see how Mr. Jason could become self-supporting.

Through the hospital where Mr. Jason went for treatments, and the family agency social worker, efforts were made to interest him in a workshop for the blind. Mr. Jason fought going there as he hated to mingle with his fellow men. He shut himself off completely from his old friends and shrank from having contact with anyone. Mrs. Jason felt that employment in the workshop was beneath her husband's dignity. At this time, through a friend, he was offered the concession of a newsstand in a public building, which was about to change hands and had always been let to some "deserving" person. This offer proved more disturbing to the family than work in the shop, because Mr. Jason couldn't face the contact with the public, involved in such a position.

Although Mrs. Jason tried to look at the matter in the light of necessity, the vision of her husband standing day after day exposing his helplessness to all the passers-by was too terrifying. But some decision was imperative. Finally Mr. Jason entered the workshop for the blind. The first week his hands were cut and swollen from trying to manipulate the reeds in caning chairs. He was exceedingly awkward in all his movements and obviously suffered acutely, both physically and emotionally. With little encouragement from his wife, Mr. Jason forced himself to continue to go day after day. He found those in charge understanding, his fellow workers sympathetic. They, too, were without eyesight and had undergone experiences similar to his.

Mr. Jason's subsequent progress is quite remarkable, for he is now one of the best workers in the shop and earns the maximum allowed each month. Further than this, he became a great favorite with all the workers as well as the teachers, and gradually the likeable traits of his personality returned. The earnings which he very proudly brought home served somewhat to reinstate him in the role of provider and restore to him some measure of self-esteem. He himself said he became a different person, and no longer brooded and wept at home. All phases of his adjustment, however, were not so simple. Mr. Jason could not seem to learn braille, and gave it up after some abortive attempts. A further disappointment was that he had lost, through his period of illness and emotional upheaval, the close relationship with his growing children. While the oldest was kind and sympathetic with his father, he did not share with him any of his real ambitions. Nor did he look to his father with the same respect he had shown formerly. The two younger children were quite apart from the older man, sulked a great deal, and were sometimes openly rude to him. But the strain of the personal relationships gradually eased with the release of financial tension and the increased security of Mr. Jason. Time was an important factor, and it took about two or three years before the Jasons felt they could or desired to renew some old acquaintances or make new ones, and began then to take up the thread of normal neighborhood participation.

### Marion Brown

Marion was an attractive, curly-headed child of six when she came under the care of a children's agency. Her father was dead, and her mother had abandoned her to relatives. Because the relatives were un-

able to care for the child and the mother did not wish to have anything to do with her, agreements were signed relinquishing Marion for adoption. She seemed at the time unusually healthy, had very winning manners and a friendly, outgoing personality. A routine Wasserman taken at the time of her physical examination was negative. It was not long before Marion was taken into the home of a young, childless couple, where she adjusted herself with apparent ease and started to school, making average progress both in work and in play.

At the age of twelve, Marion was very ill with measles, which left her with a pronounced hearing defect. Naturally, Marion's progress in school was checked, for she could not hear what was being said. She also withdrew markedly from her friends and schoolmates. Formerly cheerful and pleasant, she now became sullen and cross, would hit her schoolfellows or her foster mother when she could not "get" what was going on, was thwarted in any way, or thought someone was talking about her. The following fall, Marion was sent to a residential school for deaf girls. The curriculum included formal school subjects, training in lip-reading, sign language, and vocational courses such as cooking, sewing, and dressmaking.

Although Marion attended the school for four years, she did not make very rapid progress. Her attitude toward work was careless. She was mildly interested in learning the sign language, but would not learn lip reading. She displayed intermittent spurts of energy when she would endeavor to concentrate, but these ambitious moments were short-lived. She did fair work at dressmaking, but was usually careless in regard to details. Her relationships with the teachers and other girls were not very friendly; she frequently had quarrels and made very spiteful remarks about the school and the person who was the particular object of her quarrel. On the occasions of school vacations, she returned to her foster home, but would not co-operate there at all, was rude to her foster parents, and spent most of her time sulking.

When she was seventeen, she decided that she wanted very much to work and indicated that independence was what she craved. She came into the city where the agency already helping her was located, and, through its efforts, secured a position as mother's helper in a family consisting of a young couple with two children. Although Marion had had some lip-reading training, she was not at all facile in this and preferred to have the person with whom she was conversing write his remarks on

paper. She would also write her replies, so that much conversation was written, although Marion could speak well. Her refusal to try to use her lip-reading ability slowed her considerably in getting directions from her employer and members of the employer's family. She was not at all helpful about the house, despite her training. She was good with the children, however, and it was for that reason that she was kept in her first position for two months. She liked to play with the little boys and would teach them the sign language so that they could talk with her through that medium, a source of delight to the children.

Marion decided she was through with housework—indeed, from her employer's report, the chance of success in that field seemed remote—and she was referred to the local league for the hard of hearing, where she enrolled in a lip-reading class and took various tests in the vocational bureau. Her attendance at the lip-reading class was marked with the same lack of attention as previously. Through the efforts of the placement bureau, she was finally placed in a manufacturing establishment where a number of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons were utilized making pocketbooks. Marion loved this work and made a good record. She applied herself well, made some overtures to her companions, and became more friendly and apparently happier than she had been for a long time. One day, however, she had an argument with her supervisor who she thought was discriminating against her in not giving her enough material when the work was a bit slack and, in a burst of anger, struck the supervisor. She was immediately fired, but the experience proved most salutary, since Marion, for the first time, seemed to realize the need of making some personal effort if she were to maintain her independence. After some fruitless looking for other jobs, a contrite Marion apologized to the supervisor who had meantime talked the matter over with the vocational counselor. When some girls were taken on a few weeks later, Marion was among the number.

Marion kept her job for some little time and was subsequently married to a hearing man. The marriage seemed to bring her much happiness and served to diminish the antagonisms she had nourished previously toward those about her. What the future will hold for Marion, we do not know as yet.

These three stories but inadequately bring out the pain, both physical and mental, which is inflicted on persons handicapped by

loss of sight or hearing. Automatically they are barred from many social outlets, although the kind of deprivation differs from individual to individual. To Helen Keller, pleasures derived from contacts with her family, and later other social groups, were gradually unfolded as she became aware of them as persons to whom she could communicate her thought and from whom, even though laboriously at first, she could receive theirs. With both Charles Jason and Marion Brown, contacts which they had made were severed, and the physical isolation of their condition was accentuated by their self-imposed withdrawal. Mr. Jason's final adjustment, in so far as we know, was better than that of Marion Brown. He had more contacts, his relationship with his own family group was better, and, with his friends and acquaintances, it was excellent. But his struggle to achieve this was colossal. Marion Brown let herself be cut off from family and friends, with the exception of her husband. She refused to make use of the tools and devices by which she could reduce her distance from those about her. Her concept of life was unrealistic, and the prognosis for her future, within the narrow bounds which she circumscribed for herself, seems doubtful.

The obviousness of limitations in occupational groups needs no elaboration. Helen Keller, by virtue of superior intelligence, a persistent determination, and the devotion of family and teachers, achieved more than many persons without handicaps. But, even so, many avenues were closed to her and the choice of vocations was limited. The same was true of Charles Jason, less well endowed and with more need to become self-supporting. The meaning of a job to him is most significant, for not only did it partially restore him to his rightful place as provider for the family but it brought in some much needed financial help. We must remember that this opportunity was not provided in the usually competitive industrial scene, however, but was presented as a therapeutic measure, supported and subsidized by private interests, for persons as-

sumed by society to be hampered from participating in social life in the usual way. In other words, special efforts were made to enable him to conform to what is expected of the majority of persons in our culture. They are expected on the whole and in the long run to obtain a minimum of education, get into no difficulty with the law, and become self-supporting members of the community in an acceptable way. Most of society becomes intolerant with those who do not follow the anticipated or expected routine with few variations. But the special provision that is made for the blind puts them in a socially excused class, recognizes that individuals thus afflicted must have special concessions which do not necessarily affect their acceptance by the community.

To a certain extent, this protective attitude is offered to the deaf, although less financial assistance is given them. But vocational help and educational training are available for both, since they may not usually partake of free educational opportunities provided for others. In all of the stories presented, such educational opportunities have been made available. Helen Keller took advantage of all. Charles Jason took advantage of only the work and vocational training; the cultural assistance which braille might render was not sufficient inducement for him. Marion Brown, although given the opportunity of attending classes in lip reading and of vocational opportunities, would not recognize their usefulness, but went on expecting concessions to be made to her. Just as she was becoming aware of her part in any such program, she married and virtually withdrew from any contact with life except in her home. Naturally, each person has his own difficulties, but the three whose lives we have looked at here should furnish at least some small inkling of the problems facing those deprived of sight or hearing.

*Number and Distribution of the Blind and the Deaf.* Statistics regarding the number of blind persons in the United States are more adequate than those on the number of disabled persons. The most complete data are furnished by the United States Bureau of

the Census. The definition of a "blind person" used in successive enumerations, however, is a very broad one. Instructions direct census takers to "include as 'blind' any person who cannot see well enough to read, even with the aid of glasses." [2] Certain tests for infants and illiterates, somewhat vaguely stated, involve a further element of personal judgment on the part of the enumerators. More precise methods for defining the "blind" have been sought which will facilitate more objective counting procedures. A joint committee of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness and the American Foundation for the Blind has finally worked out a system of classifying persons with defective vision, or none, on a sliding scale, according to the amount of visual perception. Five categories of blindness have been thus defined, ranging from complete absence of vision or only light perception to certain borderline cases. The categories are differentiated by the relation of the distance at which letters on a test chart are actually seen to the distance seen with normal vision.[3] This system has not been put into widespread use as yet. It is doubtful, in any event, that it will aid the census enumerators, since the basis is a test of vision.

The number of blind persons in the United States has been tabulated every ten years since 1830. In some years, special efforts have been made to obtain supplemental information by enlisting the co-operation of schools for the blind and sending questionnaires to blind persons whose names were obtained through the census enumerators. The actual number of persons reported by the Bureau of the Census as "blind" was 5,444 for 1830, or a ratio of 423 per million of the general population, and has increased during the hundred-year interval elapsing between the first and last census to 63,489 persons, or a ratio of 517 per million of the gen-

[2] "Instructions for Enumerators," *The Blind and Deaf-Mutes in the United States, 1930* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 2.

[3] *Contributions to the Prevention of Blindness* (National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc., Publication No. 164 [1934]), p. 9.

eral population.[4] Absolute accuracy of the figures is precluded, owing to the highly subjective element influencing the compilation of the data and a reluctance on the part of many families to confess to the presence of a blind member. A general feeling exists that the census data are well below the actual number of blind persons. This belief is reinforced by sample studies in certain areas which have yielded estimates quite in excess of the census figures. One such study of seventeen selected states, carried on by the American Foundation for the Blind, served as a basis for an estimate of the total blind population in the United States as 114,000 persons, more than double the nearest census figure (1920) of 51,919.[5]

The blind population reveals certain definite and outstanding characteristics. Slightly over one third, 36.9 per cent, of those blind, according to the 1920 figures, had lost their sight in childhood or youth or been born blind. Somewhat less than one half, 43.4 per cent, of all the blind had become so between the ages of 20 and 64. The remainder, 19.7 per cent, became blind in old age. Ten per cent of the total number are reported born blind; the age at onset of blindness then diminishes until about the thirty-fifth year when there is a gradual increase continuing to the year 55.[6] As Table 7 indicates, blindness is primarily an affliction of older persons, for the bulk of those who cannot see are found among persons 60 years of age and over. The ratio per million of the general population increases at a much faster rate in the age groups above 60 until the classification 80 to 84 is reached. The pronounced concentration of blindness in the upper age brackets marks this state as peculiarly associated with advancing years. Indeed,

[4] *The Blind and Deaf-Mutes in the United States, 1930* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 4.

[5] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Handicapped Child* (1933), vol. IV-B, pp. 46–7. Data from an unpublished study by the American Foundation for the Blind and from the Bureau of the Census.

[6] Harry Best, *Blindness and the Blind in the United States* (1934), pp. 187–8.

Table 7

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION AND RATIO OF BLIND BY SEX, ACCORDING TO AGE [a]

| AGE | PER CENT DISTRIBUTION | | | | RATIO PER 1,000,000 OF GENERAL POPULATION | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Blind* | | *General Population* | | | |
| | *Male* | *Female* | *Male* | *Female* | *Male* | *Female* |
| *Total* | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 588 | 544 |
| Under 5 years | 0.8 | 0.8 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 48 | 39 |
| 5 to 9 years | 1.8 | 1.7 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 101 | 75 |
| 10 to 14 years | 2.8 | 2.8 | 9.8 | 9.8 | 173 | 131 |
| 15 to 19 years | 3.2 | 3.2 | 9.3 | 9.6 | 202 | 149 |
| 20 to 24 years | 3.2 | 2.9 | 8.6 | 9.1 | 223 | 142 |
| 25 to 29 years | 3.2 | 2.9 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 240 | 157 |
| 30 to 34 years | 4.0 | 3.0 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 318 | 181 |
| 35 to 39 years | 4.7 | 3.7 | 7.8 | 7.6 | 359 | 217 |
| 40 to 44 years | 5.4 | 4.1 | 6.4 | 6.2 | 495 | 295 |
| 45 to 49 years | 6.5 | 4.9 | 6.0 | 5.6 | 514 | 391 |
| 50 to 54 years | 7.6 | 6.0 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 915 | 572 |
| 55 to 59 years | 7.7 | 6.3 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 1,077 | 773 |
| 60 to 64 years | 8.6 | 7.5 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 1,755 | 1,128 |
| 65 to 69 years | 9.0 | 9.2 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2,256 | 1,825 |
| 70 to 74 years | 9.9 | 10.9 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 3,600 | 3,085 |
| 75 to 79 years | 8.7 | 10.6 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 6,792 | 5,800 |
| 80 to 84 years | 6.8 | 9.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 13,156 | 9,989 |
| 85 years and over | 5.8 | 9.6 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 8,750 | 10,422 |

[a] Adapted from Fifteenth Census; data also found in Harry Best, *Blindness and the Blind in the United States* (1934), p. 184.

prominent among the causes of blindness are certain diseases which attack with greatest frequency those in later years of life.

Table 7 shows also that, like the situation among the crippled, the male outnumber the female blind. Except for the later years of life, this is overwhelmingly true. Of the total number of blind persons in 1930, 57.5 per cent were men and 42.5 per cent were

women.[7] Presumably greater exposure of the male population to industrial accidents, which loom as one of the chief causes for blindness, accounts for the predominance of males. Best also suggests that an additional factor may be a greater prevalence of venereal disease among men.[8]

An ethnic differential is also noticed in the blind population, for more Negroes are found among the blind than in the general population, partly accounted for in the high general susceptibility to disease among the Negroes, insufficient care to incipient eye complaints, and limited medical facilities in many sections thickly populated with Negroes.

In comparison with the data on the blind population, it is disappointing to find such a paucity of material on the extent of deafness. The Bureau of the Census, to be sure, has been collecting data regarding the so-called deaf-mutes in the population since 1830, the same date when systematic gathering of information regarding the number of the blind was inaugurated. The definition used by the enumerators, however, has confined the number reported to "any child under eight years of age who was totally deaf and any older person who had been totally deaf from childhood or was born deaf." [9] This rigid classification eliminates two groups in the population who should be included in any discussion of hearing impairments: those who have become deafened after the age of eight years, and the hard of hearing.

The number of deaf-mutes does not equal the number of blind persons, but, as was the case with the figures for the blind, those for the deaf are considered lower than the actual numbers. The total number of deaf-mutes reported in the United States in 1930 was 57,084, or 465 per million of the general population. This

[7] Harry Best, *Blindness and the Blind in the United States* (1934), p. 175.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 176.

[9] *The Blind and Deaf-Mutes in the United States 1930* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 2.

represented an increase over the more carefully gathered material for 1920 which showed a total of 44,885 deaf, or 425 per million of the people.[10]

Because these statistics embrace only one group of those in this country who are now totally deaf or who have hearing difficulties, we are forced to use estimates as to the full extent of the problem, and these estimates are very unsatisfactory. The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, on the basis of tests of school children and drafted men, concluded there were 10,000,000 persons in the United States "whose hearing is impaired to a degree which interferes seriously with their educational and vocational progress, and with proper social adaptation." [11] This is an exceedingly large number of persons and merits the most serious consideration as does the further estimate that 3,000,000 children among the school population have hearing impairments. More detailed statistics are available only from particular states and from analyses of the population of schools of the deaf. The degree to which these specific studies are representative is unknown.

This lack of data narrows our accurate knowledge of the characteristics of the deaf. Among them, we find that there are slightly more men than women, with percentages of 51 and 49, respectively. Most of the deaf are found in the age groups from 25 to 65 years, with the largest number falling between the ages of 25 and 45 years.[12] Because in recent counts of the deaf the Bureau of the Census has excluded those who acquired this handicap after the age of eight, we know little about the age of occurrence. However, an earlier study indicates that most deafness is incurred in early childhood. Best reported in 1914 that "more than ninety per cent . . . became deaf before the twentieth year; nearly three-fourths . . .

[10] *The Blind and Deaf-Mutes in the United States, 1930*, p. 16.

[11] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 9. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930.

[12] *The Blind and Deaf-Mutes in the United States, 1930*, p. 17.

under five; over half . . . under two; and over a third . . . were born deaf." [13] If these figures are representative of present conditions, the blind and the deaf are quite unlike in age distribution and age at which the handicaps began. The percentage of persons who are blind steadily increases with advancing years, while the percentage of deaf persons is highest in middle age. Most of the blind have lost their sight in middle and later life. Most of the deaf have been without hearing from childhood.[14]

As with the blind, attempts have been made to classify those with defective hearing, according to the exact amount of auditory loss. This has been made possible by the development of the audiometer, a machine which measures accurately the hearing losses of persons tested. So far as is known, no classification of the hard of hearing corresponding to that worked out for the blind has been generally accepted, although the New York State Department of Education Bureaus for Handicapped Children and Medical Inspection of Schools have agreed upon classifications to guide them in placing hard-of-hearing children in special classes, on the basis of ratings on the audiometer tests.[15]

The number of persons in the United States who are both blind and deaf has been given by the Bureau of the Census as 169 in 1920 and 1,942 in 1930.[16] Of these figures, that for 1920 is considered the more accurate because 553 persons were first reported in this category, but 384 of these were eliminated in a follow-up study using special schedules sent to those who were reported as blind deaf-mutes.[17] Presumably, the figure for 1930 is greatly in excess of the numbers which would fall in this classification if the count were more strictly taken.

[13] Harry Best, *The Deaf* (1914), p. 7.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[15] Stephen Habbe, *Personality Adjustments of Adolescent Boys with Impaired Hearing* (1936), pp. 1–3.

[16] *The Blind and Deaf-Mutes in the United States*, p. 4.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

These data indicate that a considerable portion of the population suffers from one of these two great physical handicaps, namely blindness or total deafness. A negligible number, relative to the population at large, suffers from both. Some effects of these deprivations on the social competence of individuals will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

*Family Relations of the Blind and Deaf.* The literature dealing with the blind and the deaf unanimously points out problems of emotional adjustment induced in the afflicted individuals by their "normal" associates. A common inability to understand the circumstances of persons suffering a physical loss completely foreign to one's own experience prevails. Thus, all efforts are directed toward accommodating the blind or the deaf to a seeing and hearing society not sufficiently adjusted to the peculiar needs of the nonseeing and nonhearing. "The seeing members of society and the self-regarding attitudes they induce in the blind are entirely responsible for the emotional disturbances found in the blind as a group," [18] Cutsforth declared. The White House Conference agreed that "persons deprived of normal hearing tend to become socially maladjusted and to develop more or less serious psychopathic attitudes." [19]

Family attitudes prove no exception, for the members are as awkward in their relations to the victim as are many of the other groups with which he ordinarily mingles. Families feel helpless in not knowing what privileges to allow the blind child; they do not know how to teach him; frequently they compensate by overindulgence because of their sympathy. Helen Keller's relatives followed this latter rule until they were able to secure a teacher for the child. The many difficulties encountered daily and the lack of

[18] Thomas Cutsforth, *The Blind in School and Society* (1933), pp. 124–5. By permission of D. Appleton-Century Company.

[19] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 34. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930.

widespread educational opportunities have led to institutionalization of many children in residential schools, both publicly and privately supported. Such provision, although presumably the most adequate from an educational standpoint, places the child in a totally strange and unnatural environment. He does not have the same part in the family group which his brothers and sisters have. His family relationships are broken temporarily during much of the year. When he is at home on vacation, he may feel in the way, not wanted. The security derived from his presence in the protected situation of the institution fails him. Yet it is doubtful that he could obtain the same educational opportunities at home.

In 1930, replies to questionnaires returned from 61 residential schools for the blind showed an enrollment of 5,415 children.[20] Since the 1920 census count of the blind included only 6,582 under the age of 20 and since some of these were either under or over school age, it appears that the vast majority of blind children receive their early training and upbringing in a school situation which keeps them away from parents and siblings. However, the number of those who remain with their families is unknown because of the recognized incompleteness of all counts of the blind.

But the chief incidence of blindness is in adult life. Many of the afflicted have been reared in a family, attended public schools, shared recreational pursuits with others, and, when they reached "man's estate," assumed the burden or privilege of self-support. One would thus expect that many of the blind in the population, like Mr. Jason, are married. Statistics on the marital status of the blind, as given in Table 8, bear this out. Approximately the same percentage of male blind persons are single as are found in the general male population, but somewhat more of the female blind are single. Similarly, a smaller proportion are or have been married than is true for the female population at large. It would seem that blind males have a better chance of marrying, and of marry-

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 59.

Table 8

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION AND RATIO OF BLIND, ACCORDING TO MARITAL STATUS—1920 [a]

| MARITAL CONDITION | PER CENT DISTRIBUTION | | RATIO OF BLIND PER 1,000,000 OF GENERAL POPULATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *General Population* | *Blind* | |
| *Males* | | | |
| Total: | 100.0 | 100.0 | 752 |
| Single | 35.2 | 34.4 | 737 |
| Married, Widowed, or Divorced | 64.8 | 65.6 | 764 |
| Married | 59.4 | 45.1 | 573 |
| Widowed | 4.8 | 18.2 | 2,875 |
| Divorced | 0.6 | 2.3 | 2,715 |
| *Females* | | | |
| Total: | 100.0 | 100.0 | 583 |
| Single | 27.4 | 35.9 | 770 |
| Married, Widowed, or Divorced | 72.6 | 64.1 | 518 |
| Married | 60.7 | 25.7 | 249 |
| Widowed | 11.2 | 37.2 | 1,961 |
| Divorced | 0.8 | 1.1 | 834 |

[a] *The Blind in the United States, 1920* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1927]), p. 54.

ing seeing persons, than do blind females, whose opportunities for marriage, according to Best, "because of their generally more confined existence, are considerably more restricted than among blind males." [21]

A further characteristic of the family relationships of the blind is the tendency for neither blind widows nor widowers to remarry. Presumably age and blindness are both factors, since the chances are greater for individuals to succumb to blindness at an age beyond which marriage is usual. The proportion of blind

[21] Best, *Blindness and the Blind*, p. 204. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

males who have been divorced, large in respect to the corresponding figures for the general population, leads one to wonder regarding the extent to which blindness may be a causative factor in the divorce. As yet, any deductions along this line are mere suppositions. The figures do suggest that many of the blind must plan for their lives as lone individuals, not part of a family group.

Exact figures regarding the marriage of blind persons with each other are not available. Data assembled from small studies indicate that such intermarriages are very small in number, limited to only a few hundred in the United States. According to Best, often quoted because of his authority in this field, sentiment among the blind is against such unions. But the reasons are based primarily on economic and social considerations rather than any fear of hereditary effects. The difficulty of becoming self-supporting on the part of the blind and the complete dependence on others for many everyday wants have made it seem impractical for two such helpless persons to marry. So strongly do some of the blind feel this that one school drops a member of the alumnae association from its rolls if the member marries a blind person.[22]

Corresponding data about the deaf are not available. Inasmuch as many of the totally deaf have been so from birth or early infancy, the likelihood of marriage prior to onset of deafness is precluded. One would thus expect to find that the marital situation does not approximate that of the general population. Moreover, one would probably find more intermarriages among the completely deafened than among the blind. The same economic and social problems are not present, and the same feeling against intermarriage in the group itself apparently does not exist, at least according to the evidence of one person.[23]

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* In business and industry, the blind person is at a distinct disadvantage; occupations for the

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 208. See footnote 4.

[23] L. Curtis, "I'm Hard of Hearing," *Hygeia*, 9 (1931), 810–812.

blind in competitive industry are so few that the economic asset of vision is self-evident. The figures for the 1920 census show that only 25.4 per cent of all blind male persons were gainfully employed as against 78.2 per cent of the general male population. A similar discrepancy is apparent between the percentage of gainfully employed females in the general population and the female blind, the percentages being 21.1 and 7.8 respectively.[24]

Comparison of specific occupations for both male and female among the blind and for the general population indicate those occupations in which the blind, even though their numbers are small, have succeeded in making good. Three classifications account for most of the employment prospects. These three are manufacturing and mechanical industries, trade, and professional services. More of the blind in proportion to the general population are found in the last category than in any of the others. This is accounted for by the number of blind musicians and other professional persons who have succeeded in their careers despite the onset of blindness. Some of those listed among the industrial workers are engaged in simple handicraft activities. When finer subdivision of activities is made, certain occupations stand out as having relatively larger numbers of blind persons. The seven highest of these are: broom-making, farming, retail dealing, piano tuning, playing and teaching of music, chair caning, and hucksterizing.[25] Some of these same pursuits are found among the seven leading occupations of the blind women. For various reasons, chair caning and the teaching of music have long seemed to offer employment opportunities for which the blind are peculiarly fitted. Among the women, however, sewing, both plain and fancy, heads the list. The occupations next in order are those of music teachers, chair caners, schoolteachers, waitresses and servants, basketmakers, and farmers.[26]

[24] Best, *Blindness and the Blind*, p. 218.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 226.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 230.

Even among those gainfully employed, many are receiving only a nominal wage and cannot be thought of as self-sufficient. Best points out that those who are earning good salaries are no doubt the "cream among the blind, otherwise full of physical strength or vigor, with mental powers quite undiminished, and in some cases possibly above the common average. . . ." [27]

Table 9

FREQUENCY RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION OF BLINDNESS, ACCORDING TO SEX AND ANNUAL INCOME OF FAMILIES OF BLIND PERSONS [a]

| *Annual Income* | *Total* | *Sex* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Male* | *Female* |
| All incomes [b] | 82 | 86 | 78 |
| Relief | 136 | 151 | 122 |
| Nonrelief under $1,000 | 127 | 139 | 117 |
| $1,000 to $1,500 | 53 | 55 | 51 |
| $1,500 to $2,000 | 46 | 44 | 48 |
| $2,000 and over | 35 | 31 | 39 |

[a] "Blindness—Amount, Causes and Relation to Certain Social Factors," *National Health Survey, 1935–1936* (U.S. Public Health Service Bulletin 10), p. 6. These figures are based on a study of 2,502,391 persons, of whom 2,053 were blind, living in 83 cities. Their meaning may be illustrated thus: out of every 100,000 studied, 82 were blind. Out of every 100,000 persons in families on relief, 136 were blind. But out of every 100,000 persons in families with incomes of $2,000 and over, only 35 were blind.

[b] Includes some whose income is unknown.

Infinitely more opportunities are open for the deaf, particularly in artisan, clerical, and professional occupations. Sometimes deafness is an advantage, for the person is able to concentrate better, is less sensitive to the noise about him, and is less prone to take part

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 218. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

in conversation with fellow workers. A survey in 1934, covering twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia, dealt with 19,580 deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, one third of whom were women. It showed that 55.6 per cent had jobs, which seems an excellent showing, considering that, at that time, the employment figure for the general population was but 69.0 per cent.[28] It is interesting that, in the opinions of employers, which were solicited by the researchers, the deaf work best when engaged alone rather than on jobs where co-operation with others is required. Relatively few occupations in which a person may be engaged when deafness comes upon him require retraining. These are positions in which the relationship with other persons is particularly important, where inability to understand the spoken word makes a decided difference. Salesmen, teachers, and persons engaged in various types of personal service are particularly hampered by deafness. In most other occupations, deafness is not a great handicap. No specific trades are considered prerogatives of the deaf as piano tuning, chair caning, or broommaking are of the blind. In fact, the difficulties of the deaf in finding employment have been minimized by a worker in a vocational bureau:

> We find the problems of the hard of hearing are not much different from and no greater than those of other groups with which we work. In fact, their opportunities for employment are greater than those of some other groups. . . . Physical resistance is not impaired by a hard of hearing condition, and neither should mental health be affected. If there has been adequate medical treatment and the proper appliances have been furnished, in most instances the vocational handicap should be slight.[29]

[28] "Employment Opportunities and Vocational Guidance for the Deaf," *Monthly Labor Review*, 43 (1936), 1416.

[29] Edward Benson, "Vocational Rehabilitation of the Hard of Hearing Individual," *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the American Society for the Hard of Hearing* (1938), p. 21. By permission of the American Society for the Hard of Hearing.

*Friends, Interest Groups, and Various Activities.* The blind and the deaf are perhaps unique in the social isolation caused by their sensory defects. The blind person cannot see objects and persons about him; he cannot read the written word. The deaf cannot hear the spoken word, and many deaf-mutes and totally deaf individuals cannot communicate with others by speech. Because of his inability to see, the problem of locomotion presents many hazards for the blind. On the other hand, the deaf person is not faced with the problem of spacial restriction. Provided he watches for his personal safety, he is free to move about according to his own volition and is not dependent on another for his direction. The blind can participate in but few sports and those mostly noncompetitive. However, they do swim and ride. The deaf can take part in activities such as tennis, baseball, badminton, where hearing signals or commands are not essential. In a social gathering, where a lecture or conversation is the principal feature, the blind have the advantage over the deaf. Since educational processes depend so much on the oral communication of ideas, teaching the deaf children has been exceedingly difficult.

We have been using the terms "blind" and "deaf" here somewhat loosely. As we noted previously in discussing our definitions, there are degrees of blindness, total blindness, and degrees of loss of vision. Similarly, there are many hard-of-hearing individuals and some who are totally deaf. While their problems are differentiated only by the degree to which their amount of vision or hearing allows them to participate in social life about them, we must not forget that these differences exist. Nor must we overlook the fact that the psychology of those blind or deaf from early infancy creates special and seemingly incomprehensible difficulties when they mingle with others. If the blind and deaf could move in a world of their own, some of the situations which create emotional disturbances might be avoided.

Cutsforth, a champion of the blind, takes a very critical view of this situation and lays the blame at the door of the seeing. Attitudes toward the blind, he says, show a complete absence of understanding of their problems, particularly the effort to make them understand the world as the seeing observe it. "Socially and educationally the blind are expected to appreciate things not as they themselves experience them, but as they are taught how others experience them." [30] Although the blind are deprived of sight and the meaningful aspects of life which sight may afford them, it is not the sensory loss itself which is so disturbing as the value which the seeing place upon it, and the attendant pity, sympathy, avoidance, or whatever attitude accompanies the contact. Reaction patterns are virtually thrust upon them by a well-meaning but misunderstanding society. Witness the ready sympathy for the sightless and the pity bestowed on the indigent blind not only by the charitably inclined but by harder-hearted realists who, after contemplation of the outlook for the blind, realize its great limitations. Some shrewd blind have capitalized on this easily aroused sympathy, as have some shrewd seeing persons, to wring considerable financial aid from the purses of the softhearted. In view of this attitude of excessive compassion, it would seem that two alternatives are open to the blind seeking an adjustment to society, each distasteful to many folk. They may accept the usual role of dependents, beggars, or pensioners, drifting with the tide, at the expense of self-esteem and independence, or they may seek positions in business and industry, annoying employers, competing with seeing workmen, and generally behaving with a degree of self-assertiveness. Either course may fail to give complete satisfaction and hence may constitute maladjustment.

The deaf have less to accept from their hearing associates in the way of pity and expected patterns of behavior, but their isolation is pronounced because of their inability to indulge in the normal give-

[30] Cutsforth, *op. cit.*, p. 51. By permission of D. Appleton-Century Company.

and-take of conversation. Thus, the deaf draw away from the hearing and more closely together. Societies of deaf persons have formed acceptable substitutes for other forms of social functioning. The deaf may be tortured, however, by feeling that people are talking of them and discussing their inferiority. Their inability to speak distinctly, particularly at early ages, has created in the minds of many the impression that many deaf-mutes are also feeble-minded. Some folks have further charged that the deaf are frequently cruel and quick-tempered. Two reasons may account for this. The remoteness of the deaf from the thoughts, feelings, and normal training of others allows them to grow without sharing a bond of sympathy for those about them. Their very inability to express themselves may cause outbursts of anger, or force them to resort to temper tantrums to attain attention. Such reactions are more the fault of associates' attitudes than inherent weaknesses of the deaf. Because of their isolation, however, many deaf are apt to be very withdrawn, living within themselves. Since they cannot take a satisfying part in what goes on around them, they become very self-centered, frequently suspicious, and markedly depressed.

As braces, artificial limbs, and such appliances have played an important part in diminishing the gap between the accomplishments of the maimed and the unmaimed, certain means have been devised to minimize the social distance of the blind and the deaf from their fellows. The braille system of raised dots on a page enables the blind to read books, newspapers, and letters and to write their own thoughts and ideas. The use of a cane (who has not noticed the familiar "tap-tap" of the blind man's cane?) or a dog to guide the blind person in making his way from place to place has relieved his dependence on other persons for escort service. The amazing accomplishments and understanding shown by dogs serving blind masters have formed the basis of a special service by the "Seeing-Eye" institution where dogs are specially trained to aid the blind. Lip reading for the deaf, the use of speech, and the

knowledge of sign language have aided in bridging the gap of non-communication, and allowed the deaf to participate socially to some extent. Thus glibly stated, these may seem simple. However, great difficulties are encountered both in teaching speech to the deaf-mute and in mastering the art of lip reading to a degree approaching facility. At best, only partially satisfactory association and response are established between the deaf and the hearing.

Most of the material from which our information regarding the social habits and attitudes of the blind and the deaf is drawn rests on the observation of persons working with these individuals, and on life histories of handicapped persons. None of it is from statistical sources. Cutsforth, in his work, has made a systematic study of the blind: their satisfactions, causes of unhappiness, and the difficulties encountered in their contacts with the sighted. All these testimonies and accounts reveal problems which indicate that certain limitations on social participation are placed upon the victims, but do not indicate sufficiently the direction which these limitations take, and nothing regarding the extent. Two studies of deaf children, made under the auspices of Columbia University Teachers College, have attempted to measure with some precision the exact personality differences between hard-of-hearing and hearing children.[31]

In the study of some personality traits, Miss Brunschwig chose for her subjects pupils enrolled in public residential schools for the deaf, and hearing children in regular public schools, selected to be like the deaf group as far as possible "with respect to chronological age, intelligence, race, place of father's birth, and socio-economic status estimated by the Minnesota Revision of the Barr-Taussig Scale." [32] A series of personality-inventory scales was given the two

[31] These studies are: Lily Brunschwig, *A Study of Some Personality Aspects of Deaf Children* (1934), and Stephen Habbe, *Personality Adjustments of Adolescent Boys with Impaired Hearing* (1936). Data from these studies used by permission of Teachers College, Columbia University.

[32] Brunschwig, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

groups, as well as one or two other tests (Haggerty-Olson-Wickman Behavior Rating Schedules and the Pintner Non-Language Mental Tests). Correlations were computed of all the findings and comparisons were made between the hearing group and those hard of hearing. On the Rogers Test of Personality Adjustment, deaf boys were scored as significantly more maladjusted than hearing boys in the Daydreaming area.[33] Except for this one outstanding difference the results were not significant and were inconsistent. On the Personality Inventory for Deaf Children administered, the "deaf groups scored consistently as more maladjusted than the hearing in the areas of General Adjustment, Social Adjustment, School Adjustment, and Home Adjustment." [34] Miss Brunschwig reports that more difference was noted in the area of Social Adjustments than in any other. In a more detailed discussion of the results of the specific test items, she states:

> A larger percentage of deaf than hearing children state that children at home do not play with them, that children at their school play with them only sometimes or not at all, and that in general, few or no children play with them. Also, when compared with the hearing, more of the deaf like to play with one or two children rather than with many or none but like the children at their school very well. They prefer a book or the company of adults to that of their friends, and like to be alone.[35]

Several other items showed a tendency for the deaf to feel differently from hearing children and to prefer certain protected social situations. The evidence was not altogether conclusive, however, and the author pointed out that much more intensive research was necessary "to ascertain the nature and relationships of factors underlying the personality adjustments of the deaf." [36]

The other study referred to above was made after the one just

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 132.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 137.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 138.

discussed and was concerned more specifically with the problems of the adjustments of adolescent boys. Habbe stated his problem thus:

> (*a*) How does the personality of the hard of hearing adolescent compare with the personality of the normal hearing adolescent boy? and
> (*b*) Under what circumstances does the hard of hearing adolescent boy make, or fail to make, good personality adjustment? [37]

He selected 48 representatives of hard-of-hearing boys and 48 matched, normal boys from a population of 800,000 children examined for hearing loss, on the basis of age (limits 12 to 16), I.Q. (75 to 125), attendance in Manhattan, New York City, in the seventh, eighth, or ninth grades, completeness of record, and taking five subjects in school. The hard of hearing must have had a specified minimum biaural hearing. From the 96 lads chosen, he obtained three sets of data: showings on paper-and-pencil personality tests, teachers' ratings of behavior adjustments, and autobiographical reports. Twenty of the hard-of-hearing boys whose personality tests showed extreme cases of adjustment, either excellent or poor, were interviewed by Habbe, and much case material was obtained which threw light on the boys' problems. His findings are summarized briefly.

Little difference was noted between the hard-of-hearing and the normal hearing boys in items on the paper-and-pencil personality test, except that "the hard of hearing boys were slightly more submissive and introverted than the normal hearing boys." [38] The autobiographical material yielded more differences. The hard-of-hearing boys, in contrast to the hearing group, mentioned fewer special troubles which interfered with day-by-day life, mentioned fewer liked and disliked nicknames, listed fewer wishes, claimed a greater satisfaction with their present age period, selected their best

[37] Habbe, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

friends from among older or younger boys more frequently than the hearing boys, listed fewer abilities, mentioned fewer favorite games, and belonged to fewer formal organizations. On the teachers' ratings, the hard of hearing showed significantly greater speech difficulties, tended to be a little more easily discouraged, more abstracted, more easily fatigued, less flexible, and slower in thinking than the hearing boys. The writer also studied the eight best adjusted hard-of-hearing boys and the eight most poorly adjusted, on the basis of all the tests given, to ascertain what facilitated the boys' adjustment. He concluded "that the essential characteristics of the well-adjusted hard of hearing adolescent boy are the same as those of *any* well-adjusted boy." [39] Habbe felt the findings showed this quite conclusively, for he repeats that "personality maladjustments do not necessarily accompany real or imagined organ deficiencies. . . . *If a boy's total adjustment to life is good, then it is quite possible for him to resolve minor difficulties.*" Habbe did point out that certain phases of the deaf boy's and, correspondingly, of the deaf adult's adjustment were made difficult because of defective speech, and urged more attention to the diagnosis and treatment of speech difficulties. He felt that the deaf and the hearing did not need to be segregated, but the education of the two could be worked out more satisfactorily together. He suggested that more research on different age groups might be revealing, since maladjustment seemed to be more frequent in hard-of-hearing adults than among children.

These two studies suggest several inferences to us. One outstanding conclusion is a point we have considered before, that the physical ailment alone does not make the difference between a full life and warped associations with others. The stories of persons like Helen Keller show that this statement is very true. But we do not know in how many instances this is the case and in how many the reverse may be true and what are the several degrees in between.

[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 73–7. All of the findings are summarized from these pages.

Nor do we know what other factors in combination with the physical impairment may be most apt to cause the maladjustments of the afflicted. Another question is just what barriers are placed in the way of these persons. In the first place, admission to regular school groups is not yet possible for the blind, nor is it for the totally deaf, although, through various means such as hearing aids and lip reading, it may be possible for the hard-of-hearing child to attend regular school. Certain sports the blind cannot take part in; certain others are difficult for the deaf. The occupational field is not equally open to the normal and to those who are blind or can see poorly or are deaf or hard of hearing. Inventories of these matters would show at once the differential existing in favor of those not physically handicapped.

Further data should be obtained from the afflicted as to the exact number of social groups to which they belong and their activity in these groups. In the case of those who have not always been blind or deaf, especially valuable and pertinent material could be obtained by comparing the situation before and after the onset of the infirmity. If a significant difference were noticed, we might reasonably infer that the blindness or deafness, either because of the imposed defect or the emotional adjustment to the deficiency made by the patient, had been the inhibiting factor in that person's social life. We should like to see more studies made, pushing along the various lines suggested here, which would help us to understand the problem more fully and would furnish suggestions as to a treatment program.

*Programs for the Blind and Deaf.* As with the crippled, efforts have been mainly directed at improving physical conditions, providing opportunities for education, and offering vocational-rehabilitation services. But there is one further service provided for the blind which does not have a counterpart in services offered or programs outlined for other physically handicapped types. This is

the pension provisions for the needy blind, some form of which is found in all forty-eight states and the District of Columbia.

The medical program is both remedial and preventive. Once a person with a given defect is found, treatment facilities are provided that diagnosis and medication may be made. Frequently, ailments of the sort discussed in this chapter cannot be alleviated. The optic nerve is dead. The hearing is lost beyond any power to rebuild or any help from mechanical contrivances. Since accidents play a large part as causative factors, as do diseases of a contagious nature, emphasis is next placed on the preventive side. The whole program of safety and accident prevention sponsored by the National Safety Council and endorsed by many organizations is well known. The number of infants blind at birth has been reduced almost to the point of elimination by the practice, now well established, of putting a drop of silver nitrate in the baby's eyes at birth. The present campaign against syphilis is emphasizing the consequences of the disease for the following generations, prominent among which are blindness or deafness.

Another aspect of prevention is the early discovery of defects, by testing with more precise methods than some currently employed, particularly among the school population. Follow-up care is given in order to arrest progressive tendencies toward blindness or deafness, by securing medical attention while there is still sight and hearing to preserve.

Perhaps education has received the major attention in programs for the blind and the deaf. Because so many of the etiological factors in blindness and deafness cannot be eliminated, because medical science cannot do the impossible, provision for training the young to make the most of their handicaps remains of great importance. In all the educational schemes, the earlier the training starts the better, as the more education the more satisfactory social adjustments are apt to be made by those afflicted. Education for

these handicapped children should embrace the same fundamental subjects which normal children study. But they also need an exceptional degree of special training. For the deaf, this includes speech training, finger spelling, sign language, and lip reading—all devices which will minimize the isolation of these children from their fellows. The ability to read lips brings the child in closer touch with those around him, wherefore the teaching of lip reading is given an important place in the curriculum for deaf and hard-of-hearing children. Likewise, speech training cannot be overemphasized, as the young deaf child who has not had fluent speech habits formed prior to his loss of hearing is prone to speak thickly and unintelligibly, putting him at a disadvantage in a classroom with hearing pupils and subjecting him to possibly unnecessary humiliation. With the blind, lessons in how to read and write braille are essential in addition to the regular subjects.

Besides general academic education, provision for vocational training is also part of the general program for the blind and the deaf. Thus is recognized their need to get out in the world and become self-supporting. Inasmuch as places are so difficult to find for these handicapped young people, they frequently remain in school longer, making possible both academic and vocational education. In 1929, a total of 61 residential schools for the blind reported a total pupil population of 5,415.[40] In addition, 21 cities offered special day classes where braille was taught to 423 pupils, and, in many more, sight-saving classes had been inaugurated for those with partial vision. In September, 1932, there were 410 such classes in 118 cities.[41]

Similar provision is made for the deaf and the hard of hearing, for whose education there existed, in 1936, 209 special schools,[42] 64 of which were residential schools, 20 private or parochial, and

[40] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–59.

[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 74, 89, footnote.

[42] Josephine B. Timberlake and Betty C. Wright, "The Deaf and the Hard of Hearing," *Social Work Year Book, 1937*, p. 119.

125 day schools. Division of thought has arisen as to whether the segregated residential school, or special day school, or the regular school, with opportunity to attend special classes, is better for the deaf child. The tendency at the moment seems to be toward the special day school. The necessity for the deaf to dwell in a world of the hearing and the more gradual accustoming of all to treat him as a normal child among normal children has been the principal justification offered for such plans. More study of individual children and their educational and social progress must be done before any conclusions may be reached regarding the most efficacious method.

The vocational-rehabilitation movement, discussed in the previous chapter, has included the blind and the deaf in its broad program. Success in placing the deaf is much more marked than in placing the blind, because the deaf are able to fit into many more occupations than the blind. Some distinctly made-work opportunities are offered which cannot afford much vocational outlet for the blind. The blind still find frequent employment in the subsidized, protected workshops sponsored by private organizations and supported by donations and the selling of the goods made in the shops. In all too many instances, the earnings are pitifully small. A place for the blind where they may earn their position on their own merits is sought by many. Petitions for places for blind persons in the various Federal offices and in schools for the blind have been made from time to time, and the movement has received a new impetus recently.

Owing in part to the age-old conception of the blind as proper objects of charity and in part to the real difficulties of placing blind persons in industry, a system of pensions grew up in the early part of the present century, receiving much impetus after the World War. The Social Security Board took cognizance of the plight of the blind, in formulating its assistance program, by offering grants in aid to states matching funds and enacting legislation covering at

least the minimum requirements set up by the Board. Prior to this action of the Board in August, 1935, twenty-seven states had laws providing for cash payments to the blind. A report of twenty-four of these states showed that 31,909 received blind pensions as compared with a total number of blind in the several states reported in the census of 1930 as 39,675.[43] In some states, more persons were receiving blind pensions than had been listed on the census returns, which fact supports the previous statements regarding the incompleteness of the census figures.

Most legislation provides a lump-sum grant to needy blind, which is given with a uniformity indicating no consideration of individual needs. Once the right to a pension is established by checking through the eligibility rules, the grant may be made regardless of the background of the applicant, his educational experience, his work in the past, or his personal outlook. In the main, the pension received is a mere pittance, a sop as it were to the public conscience. A glance at the amount of some monthly pension checks shows their inadequacy as a source of support. They ranged from $0.83 in Arkansas to $33.12 in California, and maximum grants per year ranged from $150 in New Hampshire to $600 in California. The maximum monthly allowance per person from the Federal government through the Social Security Board is $15, which, if equally matched, allows a maximum stipend of $30 per month, although some states exceed this in certain circumstances.[44]

Some variation exists as to the legal definition of blindness, but, on the whole, the regulations, although expressed in general terms, are limited to the completely nonseeing, "those who have no more than light perception," "so defective as to prevent self-support," and the like.[45] Residence requirements and property qualifications

[43] *Social Security in America*, pp. 302–3.
[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 303–4.
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 306.

are also specified and vary slightly from state to state. Under the Social Security setup, no inmate of a public institution may receive the blind pension. The law also provides for a single agency in each state to administer its provisions. In 1936, the assistance-to-the-blind program was mandatory in twenty-five states and the District of Columbia.

What the pension system does not do, and some critics of the pension idea point out the defect, is to emphasize the importance of providing opportunities for the blind to become self-supporting. Socially minded folk and private charitable institutions have alike been charged with encouraging the blind to get an education, offering scholarships for college, and then being unwilling to employ any of them, even in lines for which they are qualified. The United States Office of Education is undertaking a study of employment opportunities with a view of opening new fields for the blind.

## Suggested Readings

*Blind*

Best, Harry, *Blindness and the Blind in the United States*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934. Excellent compilation of statistics and information regarding all phases of the life of the blind. Most complete book of its kind.

Cutsforth, Thomas, *The Blind in School and Society*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933. Analysis of social adjustments expected of and made by the blind, from the point of view of a blind person.

Keller, Helen, *The Story of My Life*. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1904. *The World I Live In*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1914. Two books which give the inside account of the struggles of a blind and deaf person and her relations to the world about her.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Handicapped Child*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933, vol. IV-B, "The Visually Handicapped," pp. 45–118. Reports on

incidence and causes of blindness among children and programs of treatment and education.

*Deaf*

Best, Harry, *The Deaf*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1914. A comprehensive treatise on the totally deaf, with statistics as to incidence, causes, programs of treatment, educational provisions in the United States.

Calkins, Earnest Elmo, *Louder Please*. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1924. Personal account of a deaf person's adjustment.

Habbe, Stephen, *Personality Adjustment of Adolescent Boys with Impaired Hearing*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 697, 1936. Typical of several attempts to measure the effect on personality of handicaps. Compares persons with and without the handicap.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Handicapped Child*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933, vol. IV-B, "The Deaf and the Hard of Hearing," pp. 9–44. As with the blind, gives statistics regarding incidence and cause of deafness among children, and programs of treatment and education.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Write the life history of one of the following: a person blind from early childhood, a person who became blind in adult life, a person deaf from early childhood, a person who became deaf in adult life. Follow the general instructions previously given. Note particularly interests and activities followed prior to onset of blindness or deafness as contrasted with those followed afterward.

2. Assemble several such life histories, and compare them by means of a chart to be devised by the class.

3. Give Chapin's "Social Participation Scale" (or some other measure of social participation) to persons who are blind or deaf or hard of hearing or limited in vision. Score and manipulate as before. As these data accumulate from various types of handicapped persons, some interesting comparisons may be made. However, it should be remembered that given tests may not be as valid measures of social participation in some groups as in others. Also, the samples will inevitably be so small that their representativeness must be questioned.

4. From the appropriate department of your state government, se-

cure available data concerning persons in your state who are handicapped as to sight or hearing. What services does the state offer such persons? How much schooling do they receive? Through what arrangements? What are their occupations? Incomes? Marital status?

5. Plan a visit to schools for the blind and deaf or classes for the partially sighted and hard of hearing. Seek to learn about opportunities provided for social participation; learning devices which lessen the barriers for the pupils; and what happens to their "graduates."

6. Is there any organization in your vicinity such as Association for the Blind or League for the Hard of Hearing? Secure reports or an interview with the director. Seek particularly information regarding program carried on, opportunities for social participation afforded. Also get reports from the national associations as to their program, aims, purposes, scope.

7. Inquire of various organizations whether they have any members who are blind, deaf, or with impaired sight or hearing. If so, what are their roles; i. e., do they hold office, serve on committees, take part in programs, and the like?

8. Inquire of various commercial and industrial establishments whether they have any employees who are blind, deaf, or with impaired sight or hearing. Were they employed before or after onset of the handicap? What kinds of work do they do? How does their pay compare with that of other employees? If any firm does not employ such handicapped persons, ask whether it would be willing to do so. What objections are raised to employing such persons?

9. Get in touch with representatives of some organization all of whose members are blind or with limited vision. Study the structure and function of this group. When was it started? In what circumstances? How has its membership changed? What are its declared purposes? What are its principal activities? What assistance has the group had from seeing persons and outside groups? What conflicts has it had with other groups?

10. Secure from the Federal Employment Office the number of applicants who may be defective in vision or hearing. How many can be placed? In what industries? From vocational-rehabilitation bureaus or special workshops or training centers, if there are any, inquire: How many blind or deaf are retrained? How many placed in private industry? How many subsidized in sheltered workshops?

11. Compare the various states' provisions for aid to the blind. How is this administered? What are the purposes of Federal Social Security program in relation to the blind? How many are affected? What are the eligibility requirements?

# *Chapter 7*

# CHRONIC ILLNESSES: THE DIABETIC AND THE CARDIAC

MOST blind, deafened, and crippled persons, whom we have discussed in previous chapters, suffer from chronic impairments. Tuberculosis and syphilis, examined subsequently, are also illnesses which continue to menace one's health over a long period of time. Thus, the distinction made in the title of this chapter may seem somewhat arbitrary. We confess to some overlapping in our categories, but have chosen specifically to illustrate the chronicity of sickness with these two ailments, the effects of which, subject to modification, will last throughout a person's life. Diabetes, quack remedies to the contrary, cannot be cured. It can be controlled, however. Those suffering from cardiac involvement usually undergo some permanent damage to the heart or its muscles, which cannot be repaired. The nonrecuperative aspects of these illnesses arouse in their victims responses similar to those of the crippled. But the sensory loss of the blind and the deaf does not occur. Nor is there a disfigurement which may accompany many orthopedic impairments.

We present here some of the problems of day-by-day living encountered by diabetics and cardiacs. Perhaps the most outstanding factor, differentiating these folk from those previously studied, lies in the rigidity of the treatment program on which the very life of the afflicted individual depends.

**Marie Janezeki**

For eleven years, Marie had run at will with her six brothers and sisters in the dirty tenement section where her family had lived ever since they came to America. Her parents had been born, reared, and married in the "old country," and her oldest brother had been born there. On their arrival, the small family came right to a large industrial city and settled near a kinsman in a poor section. Their none-too-ample quarters became very crowded with increases in the family. But no one seemed to be greatly troubled about this. Mr. Janezeki had no skill to offer and had to depend on his strength alone for jobs. He had continuous difficulty in keeping the family from actual want. Neither parent took the trouble to learn the English language or American ways. Mrs. Janezeki had relatively little contact with any except her countrywomen and spoke a most broken dialect. Her husband did little better. Their lives abroad had been much restricted. The American changes made little impression on the old people. The children led a free life for the most part, as the parents could not or would not exercise much control. Meals were not regular; the whole atmosphere was carefree and irresponsible.

During her eleventh year, Marie became very ill and was sent to the Municipal Hospital. There her illness was diagnosed as diabetes. She remained at the hospital several months, progressing under a properly planned regime. Repeatedly the nurses, doctor, and social worker attempted to explain to her and to her parents the nature of the sickness, the diet required, and the use of insulin. As far as Mr. and Mrs. Janezeki were concerned, it was like talking to the proverbial stone wall. Yet the parents pressed for Marie's return home. With great difficulty, through an interpreter, the social worker felt she had inculcated some of the rudiments of treatment required—the regime of diet, exercise, insulin. Mrs. Janezeki promised co-operation.

Four times within a year, Marie was brought back to the hospital in a diabetic coma. The attempts of the hospital social worker to get Marie and her parents to co-operate seemed fruitless. The latter claimed the girl stole food from them or from the neighbors and from children at school. They could not hold her to the diet and dismissed their responsibility with a shrug. Nor could they really see the use of all the fuss and "red tape." That she could never get over her ailment was

meaningless to them. They were somewhat shocked each time Marie actually had a coma, but were relieved again at her response after hospital treatment.

After the fourth coma, the doctors pronounced her family impossible to work with and decided that if Marie were to live she must be away from the family, where she would be kept to her regime quite strictly. A convalescent home was found where Marie would be able to receive the physical care necessary. So she was moved, after the plan was carefully explained to her and to her family. The family was relieved, for by this time the seriousness of the child's condition, impressed on them by the nurse, had made them feel afraid to take care of her. Mrs. Janezeki said she could not control Marie, and Mr. Janezeki said he did not want the responsibility of Marie in his home, if it meant the question of life or death. So a new plan was tried.

The matron at the home was a kindly, understanding person. She tried to facilitate Marie's adjustment to her problems by not making a point of her diet and routine. In school, Marie was put back a grade. Her school progress had been much interrupted, and her record, with her many absences and her natural slowness, was not good. Marie found the new school adjustment difficult and soon began to feign insulin reactions to get attention. The matron was soon able to detect these attempts of Marie's and tried to help the girl realize that it was "up to her" to control her condition by abiding by her diet and insulin rules. Marie did begin to give up her pseudo reactions, but consistently refused to take any responsibility for her regime. When she went home to visit, as she did occasionally, she was provided with sufficient food for her stay. But she would invariably break her diet. On one such visit, she was obliged to go to the hospital again, in a serious condition resulting from a wrist infection, and to remain there for some time. On the whole, however, her improvement in the convalescent home was marked. The doctors urged the continuation of this plan.

Marie grew very fond of the matron and the nurse in the small institution, but she always longed for her own home, went there frequently, and on one or two occasions ran back home. The social agency under whose care she was decided that attempts should be resumed to interpret the child's condition to the family and to consider allowing her to return, since her home associations meant so much to her. Furthermore, since she was growing older, she should be more able to take care of herself and man-

age her regime. It was felt, too, that her co-operation might be more readily forthcoming if she were given this concession. Marie was very slow in school, and the difficulty of keeping up with the others caused a great strain which was not present in her easygoing family, where school attendance and achievement were not highly valued. With the services of an interpreter and Marie's help, her condition was reviewed with her family. Every detail of diet was gone over. The routine of insulin was explained. Visits to the doctor were outlined. Joyfully Marie left for home.

Marie was there at the time this record was read, and was enjoying life among the noisy brood. She is inclined to neglect her instructions, but her father now takes a scolding attitude and demands that Marie follow the doctor's orders. Marie is thus struggling to maintain her regained health, a struggle which is quite possible for her providing she accepts the limitations of her regime. She is beginning to consider vocational possibilities, for she is eager to work. She feels that her physical condition may prevent her from entering any factory position which she might like. The social worker tried to interest her in some activity at the occupational-therapy workshop, but her interest was spasmodic and desultory, and the attempt was abandoned. If she is to live, she must follow her prescription, but she has not fully appreciated that she alone holds the key to her own future. Now she is trying to live as she would wish, without reconciling the demands of her regime. She makes compromises and substitutions, but does not face the real issue.

**Floyd Wagner**

Floyd's story is in no way spectacular. He is just one of many boys who when young was stricken with rheumatic fever, which has left him in such a weakened condition that he must protect himself for years to come. He happens to have been under the protection of a children's social agency, but he might have been in his own home had his mother lived. Almost since birth, he has lived in the home of relatives and in institutions before going to a foster home with his two sisters. His father, since the breaking up of his own home, felt that placement offered the best plan for the three. His business was so poor he could not meet the expense of maintaining a home and someone to care for the children.

When Floyd was three years old, he had complained of pains in his legs, and, in fact, for a time his legs seemed partially paralyzed. The

clinic thought he had a slight systolic murmur and possibly a mild attack of infantile paralysis. Later, his slight paralysis seemed to clear up, and he apparently suffered no ill effects of the attack. For a time after this upset, he seemed to progress very well. He had a pleasant manner, was very likeable, and made a place for himself with his foster parents and with their friends. The children liked him. He was always seen playing outdoors with his many friends. In school, too, he was a favorite, although he was slow to learn.

In the second grade, Floyd was taken severely ill with grippe and complained at the same time of pains about his heart and in his feet. His illness continued for a month; meanwhile he grew more and more listless and pale. The doctor then said that Floyd showed definite symptoms of a severe cardiac involvement, probably of rheumatic origin. He was hospitalized for an indefinite period which amounted eventually to four months. During this time, he had to lie completely still. When he was returned to his foster home, he was still obliged to remain very quiet, was not allowed to walk at all, being carried everywhere by his foster parents. By the following fall, nine months after his illness, he was walking a bit, and started back to school for a few hours each day. About one year later, he had another attack of fever and was in and out of the hospital for several months, always having to remain very quiet. He was helped with his lessons at this time by his sisters and his foster mother who was devoted to him. Finally, he was sent for more complete rest to a convalescent home in conjunction with the hospital. There he had the companionship of other children and participated in their schoolwork.

Floyd was at the convalescent hospital for two years and then returned home with a strict regime of rest prescribed. He returned to school, but took no part in any exercise, and spent much of his free time resting. This went on for two years. As it happened, Floyd was an adaptable person, always eager to please, and thus he accepted his restrictions with great fortitude. He had enjoyed very much playing with the other children, and, at first, used to cry silently because he could not run about with them. As time went on, he contented himself with looking wistfully at the other children. After almost three years again at his foster home, where he attended school but kept to a strict program of inactivity, he had another attack of fever and was returned to the convalescent home for a period of three months, where he still is. With

rest, his heart should grow stronger, although how much he will be able to do as time goes on remains to be seen. Certainly he will have to maintain a strict regime for some time to come. But with recognition of his severe limitations, he can do many things, indulge in a number of activities not requiring much exertion. He will probably have to be trained for some sedentary occupation, providing his condition becomes no worse.

The isolation of Marie and Floyd from family and friends is less marked than was the case in some of the other handicapping conditions studied. Separation from their parental homes was due to inadequacy of the home rather than to the demands of the ailment itself. Both had contact with friends and belonged to school groups. In Floyd's case, the companions of his own age group were, for many months, others sick like himself. Like the crippled, both Marie and Floyd could participate socially within the limits of their physical condition. They differed in their ability to accept their limitations. Had Floyd been older, less passive, he might have rebelled more at his inability to indulge in active sports. Although he wept quietly, he did keep to his restrictions. Marie did not do this, her carelessness producing severe physical discomfort. One diabetic, whom the same agency knew, was most rebellious about his physical limitations and was, in addition, frequently at odds with the family, particularly his mother. In fits of anger, to get even with those who had thwarted or hurt him, he would break his diet and induce diabetic coma. Efforts to reach him proved fruitless, and he finally died in a coma brought on by his purposeful overindulgence.

A peculiar sensitiveness is produced in diabetic children and adults, induced by the attitude of their contemporaries. Children feel ashamed to indulge only in their special diet. They are mortified to be seen injecting themselves with insulin. Adults frequently get a shocked reaction from those about them who feel they are taking "dope." One diabetic, describing the adjustments made

necessary by his ailment and established regime, told of a humiliating experience when, attempting to inject a dose of insulin in himself in the cloakroom of a theater, the attendant tried to have him arrested as a "dope" addict.[1]

Another characteristic of diabetes is that the control of the physical defect lies with the patient. Diabetes can be checked and its ill effects practically prevented by following very carefully the diet, exercise, and insulin which the doctor has prescribed. We have seen in Marie's case that when she was following her regime, she was in good physical condition and could carry on her schoolwork and social life. But when she broke her regime, as she did frequently, it was the signal for recurrence of symptoms, usually requiring hospitalization. This essential matter of regime seems difficult to understand, particularly for those unfamiliar with the disease and those not well educated. We saw with what resistance Mr. and Mrs. Janezeki met the efforts of the doctors, nurse, and social worker in their interpretation of Marie's needs. It was not until they had seen the results for themselves that they showed any conception of the child's condition.

The same is true to some extent of heart conditions. In Floyd's case, after his strict convalescence in the hospital and rest home, a regular schedule of rest, activity, and diet was followed. Although he was very docile and co-operative and his schedule was followed to the letter by his foster mother, his physical condition was such that he did not recuperate rapidly. With the continuation of the care which he has been receiving, he should be able to have more freedom as he grows older, but will undoubtedly have to prepare for a sedentary, protected life. It means he will always have to favor himself, and his social participation may thus be limited in extent and kind.

*Incidence of Diabetes and Cardiac Ailments.* Of these two condi-

[1] R. D. Reynolds, "In the Shadow of the Needle," *Hygeia*, 11 (1933), 691.

tions which have been used here as examples of chronic illnesses, the incidence of heart ailments is far in excess of diabetes. Unfortunately, we do not know with any certainty the extent of either ailment. Neither is reportable monthly as are cases of communicable diseases. For statistical material, recourse must be had to special studies or surveys, and mortality statistics covering the fatal cases.

The mortality rate for diabetes in New York City has been quoted by Bolduan in the *American Journal of Public Health* as 30 per 100,000 of the population, during the five-year period, 1931–1935.[2] Since that time, the rate has been substantially reduced. The rate for 1936 and for 1937 was 23.7 per 100,000 population, and the actual number of persons whose death was caused by diabetes was approximately 30,500 each year.[3] Recent progress in treatment of diabetes has resulted in marked reduction of mortality, although the reduction in figures may not fully reflect progress actually made, considering the greater skill in diagnosing the disease. Undoubtedly many cases of diabetes have gone unrecognized, and presumably this is still true. Dr. Joslin, author of a well-known diabetic manual, and a foremost researcher into the problems of the diabetic, feels that reduction in the death rate from this cause is due to the prolongation of life of the young diabetics. Decreases are marked in the lower age brackets, but increases are apparent among those 60 to 70 years of age.[4]

Some studies of the prevalence of the disease show a formidable incidence, somewhat surprising considering the general knowledge of and attitude toward diabetes. In 1934, Joslin, Dublin, and

[2] C. F. Bolduan, "Diabetes—An Important Public Health Problem," *American Journal of Public Health*, 28 (1938), 22. Data used by permission of the American Public Health Association.

[3] "Vital Statistics Summary for the United States," *United States Public Health Reports*, 54 (1939), 1048.

[4] E. P. Joslin, *Diabetes, Its Control by the Individual and the State* (1931), pp. 29–33. These conclusions are based on figures from Massachusetts.

Marks estimated that there must be at least 300,000 diabetic persons in the United States.[5] They based their calculations on the death of approximately 30,000 persons from diabetes in 1930 and a life expectancy of ten years for those diagnosed as diabetic. This estimate was felt to be conservative. Some further evidence points to a higher number. A study of cases of diabetes among 3,685 persons admitted to state mental hospitals "indicated that in New York City there might be as many as 100,000 diabetics." [6] Other studies in New York carried on by the New York Diabetes Association, which, in co-operation with the Health Department, sent questionnaires to private physicians, estimated a ratio of two diabetic patients to every doctor. In one year, 8,000 diabetic patients had been treated at various metropolitan clinics. Summarizing this and other evidence, Bolduan concludes, "There is reason to believe that the total number of diabetics in New York City is not far from one per cent of the population, and it is probably conservative to estimate the diabetics in the United States as over 600,000." [7] This figure is twice that of the 1934 estimate of Joslin and Dublin.

Even though the total number of afflicted can be estimated only, certain characteristics of the incidence of diabetes are definite. The disease is much more frequent among women than among men. According to the 1930 figures, mortality rates showed a ratio of 15 males per 100,000 population to 27 females per 100,000 population.[8] These figures covered white persons only. This is in striking contrast to the situation in any of the physical disabilities mentioned previously, where the incidence among men has far outnumbered that among the female members of the population.

[5] E. P. Joslin, Louis I. Dublin, Herbert H. Marks, "Studies in Diabetes Mellitus. Part II, Its Incidence and the Factors Underlying Its Variations," *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, 187 (1934), 434–5.

[6] Bolduan, *op. cit.*, p. 24. By permission of the American Public Health Association.

[7] Bolduan, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[8] Joslin, Dublin, Marks, *op. cit.*, p. 440.

Diabetics are found also in greater numbers in urban than in rural areas. The mean death rate per 100,000 white population for 1928 and 1929 was 24.4 in urban centers and 14.3 in the country.[9] Because of this, New England and the Middle Atlantic states have a higher incidence of diabetes than does the Midwest.

A racial factor also appears. Diabetes is very common among Jewish people. Studies of its prevalence among various peoples showed that natives of Russia and Austria-Hungary ranked high, owing to the presence of large numbers of Jewish persons; Germans and Irish exhibited also a substantial incidence. Italians were among the lowest. The disproportionate frequency of the disease among Jewish persons in New York is shown in the following table. The city has a large Jewish population, so that the figures here

Table 10

DIABETES DEATH RATE PER 100,000 OF JEWISH AND TOTAL POPULATION IN NEW YORK CITY, 1925 [a]

| *Age Groups* | *Jewish Population* | *Total Population* |
|---|---|---|
| All ages | | |
| Standardized | 35.8 | 24.4 |
| Crude | 24.7 | 22.3 |
| Under 25 years | 0.4 [b] | 0.9 |
| 25–34 | 2.2 [b] | 2.2 |
| 35–44 | 7.2 | 8.1 |
| 45–54 | 60.2 | 39.2 |
| 55–64 | 170.4 | 134.2 |
| 65–74 | 360.1 | 239.4 |
| 75 and over | 506.7 | 232.1 |

[a] E. P. Joslin, Louis I. Dublin, Herbert H. Marks, "Studies in Diabetes Mellitus, Part II, Its Incidence and the Factors Underlying Its Variations," *American Journal of the Medical Sciences,* 187 (1934), 448. Data used by permission of Lea and Febiger.

[b] Based on less than ten deaths.

[9] Joslin, Dublin, Marks, *op. cit.*, p. 442.

may reflect a different situation than might be found in other cities. The table also shows the increase in deaths with age, both among the Jewish people and in the general population.

Some distinction also appears among the occupations pursued by the diabetic. Studies in both England and America show that the disease occurs rarely in the lower economic classes, specially among common laborers and coal miners. Those engaged in the professions and in merchandizing, particularly railway engineers, trainmen, and those selling liquor and foods, represent callings in which a high incidence of diabetes is found.[10]

Statistics are more readily available regarding heart conditions. Since, for two decades, deaths from "heart disease" have led all others, considerable attention has been paid to the many aspects of heart troubles, particularly by the American Heart Association. Mortality from various diseases of the heart increased from 1920 to 1930 both in absolute figures and in the percentage of all deaths. In 1930, the death rate was 116.3 per 100,000 of the population, greater than the second leading cause of death, cancer. Table 11, which follows, analyzes the mortality statistics from heart ailments, according to age groups, and compares the results with percentages of the whole population. It is noticeable here that the percentage of deaths is not significantly large until after the age of 50. The table definitely fixes death from heart disease as a problem of old age. The greatest number of deaths occurs between the ages of 70 and 74, but the age group 75–79 shows a greater percentage of the population stricken.

Though fatalities are much less imminent among children suffering from heart ailments than adults, the incidence is indeed formidable and represents an important focal point for those interested in protecting children's health and welfare. From the standpoint of prevention, the American Heart Association says, referring to the accompanying table, "Perhaps the most significant figure for

[10] *Ibid.*, 449–452.

Table 11

## DEATHS FROM HEART DISEASE COMPARED WITH DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES, BY AGE GROUPS

United States Registration Area—1930 [a]

| *Age Groups* | *All Causes* | *Heart Disease* | *Per Cent of Total* |
|---|---|---|---|
| All ages | 1,343,356 | 253,084 | 18.8 |
| Under 5 | 195,200 | 1,304 | 0.7 |
| 5–9 | 22,956 | 1,189 | 5.2 |
| 10–14 | 17,652 | 1,651 | 9.4 |
| 15–19 | 30,990 | 2,083 | 6.7 |
| 20–24 | 41,515 | 2,504 | 6.0 |
| 25–29 | 42,006 | 2,964 | 7.1 |
| 30–34 | 43,913 | 4,040 | 9.2 |
| 35–39 | 53,596 | 6,008 | 11.2 |
| 40–44 | 60,994 | 8,941 | 14.7 |
| 45–49 | 71,282 | 12,850 | 18.0 |
| 50–54 | 83,860 | 17,514 | 20.9 |
| 55–59 | 91,122 | 21,367 | 23.4 |
| 60–64 | 106,669 | 27,793 | 26.1 |
| 65–69 | 115,813 | 32,566 | 28.1 |
| 70–74 | 122,400 | 36,592 | 29.9 |
| 75–79 | 104,605 | 32,273 | 30.9 |
| 80–84 | 76,308 | 23,455 | 30.7 |
| 85–89 | 41,659 | 12,606 | 30.3 |
| 90 and over | 18,949 | 5,118 | 27.0 |
| Unknown | 1,867 | 266 | 14.2 |

[a] American Heart Association, *Heart Disease Mortality Statistics* (1934), Table 2. Data used by permission of the American Heart Association, Inc.

use in a preventive campaign is the percentage of heart disease deaths in the age period 10–14, which is over 9 per cent. While the general mortality of that particular age period is always low, the fact that heart disease takes a higher proportion at that age than at any other up to age 35 should be an indication of what remains to

be done in the way of prevention of heart disease among school children." [11]

The prevalence of heart disease among school children has caused considerable concern among physicians and public-health officials; numerous studies have revealed varying but appreciable numbers of children with chronic heart conditions mainly resulting from rheumatic fever. The White House Conference reports on heart disease among children called particular attention to the fact that heart conditions commonly develop in early life even though death may not take place until many years later, stating that "practically 75 per cent of all cases of heart disease develop in children under ten years of age, as compared with about 12 per cent in persons over forty years." [12]

Incidence of heart diseases among school children has been variously estimated in a number of careful studies of selected groups. The following composite table gives some indication of the numbers of children with organic heart ailments or victims of rheumatic heart diseases.

In order to arrive at some conservative estimate of cardiac children, the White House Conference scanned all then existing studies and figured roughly that one per cent of all children under 19 might have heart disease, making a total of 450,000 children who had potential or actual cardiac limitations.[13] The incidence is frequent enough to cause some concern.

The percentage of children and older persons afflicted varies in different places, and, in general, studies have shown that the rate is higher in the more congested areas. This is more true of the heart conditions of children than of adults. Some heart ailments,

[11] American Heart Association, *Heart Disease Mortality Statistics* (1934), p. 3. By permission of the American Heart Association, Inc.

[12] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 231–2. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

Table 12

INCIDENCE OF ORGANIC AND RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE IN SCHOOL POPULATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES [a]

| Locale | Date | No. of Children Examined | RATE PER 1,000 Organic Heart Diseases | RATE PER 1,000 Rheumatic Heart Diseases |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| San Francisco | 1937 [b] | 13,338 | 3.7 | 2.20 |
| " " | 1931–1934 | 86,082 | 3.7 | 1.55 |
| Cincinnati | 1930 | 6,960 | 3.7 | 2.90 |
| New York City | 1921 | 44,000 | 5.0 | 4.30 |
| Boston | 1927 | 119,337 | 5.2 | 4.60 |
| Chicago | 1923 | 158,826 | 9.0 | 7.20 |
| Philadelphia | 1929 | 10,333 | 9.1 | 8.20 |
| New York City | 1918–1922 | 1,336,343 | 13.9 | — |
| Philadelphia | 1935 [b] | 33,293 | 6.0 | 3.90 |
| New Haven | 1934 | 5,758 | — | 48.10 |

[a] J. J. Sampson, A. Christie, and J. C. Geiger, "Incidence and Type of Heart Disease in San Francisco School Children," *American Heart Journal,* 15 (1938), 668. Data used by permission of the C. V. Mosby Company.

[b] Date not given, but indications are that the study was made within recent years.

as angina pectoris, an affliction of middle age, seem to occur more frequently among the higher economic classes. Like diabetes, heart diseases are more frequent in urban than rural parts of the country; and they are less frequent in the Southern states than in other regions. Rheumatic fever is especially a disease of temperate climate, and its onset occurs more frequently in the spring of the year than at other times.[14] In view of the higher rates in congested regions, rheumatic heart conditions of children are thought to be affected in a general way by economic status, since proper diet, fresh air, and sunshine are essential for treatment.

[14] "International Health Broadcast," *American Heart Journal,* 16 (1938), 103–05.

*Family Relationships of the Chronically Ill.* We have no data for the number of persons among either of these two classifications who are single, married, or divorced. Such information might be extremely significant, if we had it. A new element, not present in our discussion of other handicapping conditions, may be operative here—the possibility of an hereditary influence in diabetes. Opinions differ among doctors as to whether the tendency for diabetes to occur in families points to such an influence or not. Some doctors have felt that a diabetic should not marry, or, if he does, that he should not have children. No conclusive evidence is available on this point. Some persons do react, however, to a doctor's feeling that heredity may play a part, even though large numbers of diabetics have married and have had children not afflicted with the disease. A study of a small number of young persons in St. Louis showed some evidence of conflict here. Two of the young persons of marriageable age, one a woman and the other a man, who were interviewed by the investigator, stated then that they would not marry. The reason given by the man was that he would fear passing on the disease to offspring, and preferred not to take that chance. He expressed himself as not wanting to involve another healthy individual in an arrangement of enforced sterility. The young woman felt that no man would want her if she could not bear children, and she felt the latter too great a risk.[15]

On the other hand, the same investigator found that eight of the young persons were married and, with one exception, were adjusting satisfactorily. In the exception, marital conflict occurred over problems other than health. In each case, the mate knew of the condition prior to marriage and was not concerned about the condition. One of the diabetics felt his self-confidence increased when he discovered that his wife accepted his condition very unconcernedly. He had previously been most self-conscious about it. All of the

[15] Annette Seltzer, "The Social Adjustment of the Young Diabetic" (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1938), pp. 46–7.

women had been advised against bearing children, but three had borne them successfully. In one instance, objections were raised by prospective in-laws, but these objections were removed after talking to a doctor.

Many doctors believe that with diabetic patients the economic aspects of the disease are far more serious than the physical. Diabetes is an expensive disease. Insulin, on which the diabetic depends for his life, is costly. Special foods must be purchased in sufficient quantities and must be weighed out precisely. A young couple about to marry, when one is a diabetic, should certainly face the problem of expense, else the mate not afflicted may begrudge the extra expenditures entailed. Dr. Joslin, in his manual, urged young diabetics not to marry "unless sufficient capital was available to provide for a 'sick fund,' " since the cost of the diet and insulin was great and the possibility of hospitalization always present.[16]

The economic aspect of the disease is also important to the family of a diabetic child. The expenses become a serious item in a limited budget, to such an extent that the patient's health may be affected or a rift in family relationships produced. Parents with a small income have taken resentful attitudes toward the expenditures, making the child feel uncomfortable and guilty because of a condition for which he is in no wise to blame. Or they may sacrifice so cheerfully that the child feels that he is too great a burden. One youth in St. Louis could not bear to see the strain on his family of meeting his medical costs, so he "cheated" on his insulin dosage to make it last longer. This so undermined his physical condition that he had to be hospitalized. At the other extreme was a situation where a misunderstanding father begrudged the financial outlay for his daughter and developed a deep resentment toward her, for he felt her needs kept him from forging ahead.[17]

Conditions are somewhat different with heart ailments. In some

[16] E. P. Joslin, *A Diabetic Manual* (1934), p. 160.
[17] Seltzer, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

severe cases, the strain of childbearing may be too much for a woman, and a childless marriage may be imposed. What part these physical restrictions play on the husband-wife relationship, we do not know. The treatment of heart ailments is not so costly and may be less of a financial burden. With diseases of children, the problem may be one of getting them away from a poor environment, since surroundings seem to be such an important factor, and most cases are found among the less economically favored. Heart ailments as well as diabetes may necessitate breaks in the family groups because of hospitalization or convalescent home treatment, particularly for cardiacs. Need for such treatment of the diabetic is diminishing as greater reliance is placed on home care. An intelligent patient can learn his own regime and take care of himself satisfactorily. Will power is as important an asset as knowledge of the disease itself.

The necessity for a rigid regime for children afflicted with either of these conditions may create difficulties in the home. Some parents assume a domineering, authoritative attitude, checking Johnny at every step and not allowing him any opportunity to exercise his own judgment. This may make Johnny more restless and more impatient with the role he must play. On the other hand, some parents become so overprotective of their children, doing everything possible for them except take the medicine, and seeking special favors at school, that a child may become extremely dependent and deserve the epithet of "sissy" which he will likely have hurled at him by his companions. In a study in Boston of 60 diabetic children, the investigators found an appalling lack of understanding on the part of the parents of these children. In about 50 per cent of the cases, some factors in the home situation were interfering with the prescribed treatment. One misguided mother was protecting her "darling" to the point of encouraging him even though sugar was apparent in his specimens. Finally, when the quantity increased, she brought herself to speak of it to him and found he had been

breaking his diet continuously. At first, he had feared that she would find it out, but when she kept on praising him, he kept on eating more forbidden fruit.[18]

It is unfortunate that all we know in this area is derived from some individual cases, which we can cite as illustrations, and from the limited studies of diabetics in St. Louis and Boston. Further investigation along the lines indicated here may give us more precise understanding of how family relationships are influenced. All we know now is that the onset of these illnesses usually forces some new adjustment within the family, which may decidedly affect the individual's role in the group.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* For the persons with an impairment of the heart, need for preferential job treatment is obvious. The adult who must readjust his ways to a more or less sedentary and inactive life frequently needs retraining. Vocational-rehabilitation organizations have always some cardiacs among their clientele. The very definite restrictions on movement, with the natural limitations which some of the victims may have within their own personality, make the problem more difficult. For the youth growing up with a weak heart, training for occupations within his physical ability and mental capacities is necessary. The problems of the cardiac, thus, are similar to those of other groups previously discussed, with perhaps one difference: the cardiac does not need to learn to manipulate artificial aids such as braces or limbs, or learn special skills such as reading lips or braille. He is intact as far as his extremities and senses go—only that very vital organ, his heart, is functioning imperfectly.

Placement of these persons is rendered difficult mainly because of fear on the part of the employers of death or injury while at work. They are apprehensive of drainage on sick funds or insur-

[18] Mary A. Clapp and Rachel L. Hardwick, "The Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus —A Study of Home and School Relationships," *Hospital Social Service*, 22 (1930), 291.

ance. Judgments rendered in cases of workmen's compensation, where the victim has had a "heart condition," have taken a heavy toll in some spectacular cases, making an employer justifiably wary of the cardiac. Dr. Stroud of Philadelphia, who has made some studies of the vocational problems of those afflicted with a variety of heart diseases, has found that the cardiovascular group is the one most easily trainable and most safely available for industry.[19] Many are able to perform tasks very skillfully and have worked in the sheltered workshops at sewing, upholstering, carpentry, and woodwork. The earnings of these persons range from $0.75 to $1.68 per day.[20] The Philadelphia Heart Association, in cooperation with the Philadelphia Health Council and the Tuberculosis Committee, embarked on a campaign from 1926 to 1932 to place some of the cardiac group in jobs. During that period, 388 placements were made, involving 280 individuals. The total earnings of the group from 1929 to 1932 were approximately $90,000. The jobs were obtained only by persistent solicitation of employers.[21] Some limitations of employment which had to be stressed pertained to stair climbing, standing, stooping, weight lifting, and walking. Good general working conditions were also deemed essential, and a minimum of nervous tension. A variety of positions was filled, with a majority in clerical and skilled trades.

The diabetic's problems are different. General agreement has it that diabetes may be controlled by diet and insulin. Diet must be rigidly followed, and food taken at regular intervals in proper proportions. Emphasis is placed on the taking of insulin in prescribed quantities at specified intervals. With acceptance of this routine, the individual should function about as usual. Dr. Joslin puts the matter very strongly:

[19] William D. Stroud, "The Rehabilitation and Placement in Industry of Those Handicapped with Cardiovascular Disease," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 105 (1935), 1401.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 1402.

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 1402–3.

Insulin has wrought a revolution in the lives of severe and moderately severe diabetics. It allows such individuals to take part in large measure in all that goes on about them, just as diet alone enables the mild diabetic to lead a successful existence. With the help of insulin I have seen children go back to school, enter and graduate from college, young women and men get married and have healthy children, ministers secure a parish, lawyers reenter court, doctors carry on a hospital service, nurses resume work. It is true nearly all of these activities are mental or professional activities; consequently, it is well to record that mechanics have been enabled again to carry on occupations which had been renounced for many months and even to perform strenuous labor, and college students to play on the "Varsity" athletic teams. Insulin, therefore, not only changes the severe and moderately severe diabetic into a milder diabetic, but protects all diabetics in time of emergency.[22]

In reality, although what Dr. Joslin says is true, practical obstacles are found in the industrial scene. A job may require a quick lunch eaten on the premises, with no chance to get the proper food. Working hours may be such that the correct intervals between injection of insulin cannot be observed. The embarrassment with which many persons give themselves "shots" under observation is another factor creating difficulties for some. Several of the St. Louis young men encountered problems of this kind. One of them, driving a delivery truck, had hours which interfered with his regime and allowed no opportunity for giving himself insulin at the time specified. He lost weight on the job and felt he must abandon it. Another chap felt he must be "one of the boys" and bring sandwiches as they did, gulping them down in a few seconds' time. He finally solved his problem by arranging to have lunch at a near-by restaurant where the cook would prepare his special foods. With another, no problem existed, although he traveled with a carnival in the summer. He brought his own supply of food and prepared it himself.[23]

[22] Joslin, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–7. By permission of Lea and Febiger.
[23] Seltzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–9.

Another factor which figured in following the regime and injecting insulin was fear of dismissal. "My boss would fire me if he knew I was diabetic." Many concerns have group-insurance schemes, but companies are reluctant to write insurance covering the diabetic. Thus, some are not hired because of these restrictions. The basis of the difficulty is the always present possibility of diabetic coma and the "jag" sometimes produced by overdose of insulin. The latter reaction, which is similar to the lack of muscular co-ordination displayed by an inebriate, may cause real danger in certain occupations. Only two of the young persons in St. Louis, however, felt that they had been discharged because of their condition, owing in both instances to group-insurance regulations. Several of the boys were rejected for the army, and two of the girls were denied the opportunity to train for nursing.[24] Thus some occupations are definitely barred to the diabetic.

On the whole, those included in the St. Louis study followed a variety of occupations, including those of truck driver, plumber, factory worker, laboratory technician, salesman, stenographer, maid, toolmaker, and stock clerk. Nine persons had been placed by the Bureau for the Handicapped of the American Red Cross, which included diabetics among those in its training classes. The Federal bureaus do not exclude diabetics, but have not had many come to them for placement.[25] Many factors apparently operate to make the diabetic a great problem vocationally. A few occupations are prohibited. But the greatest obstacle seems to lie in the difficulty of adjusting the demands of his job with those of his regime.

*Friends, Interest Groups, and Various Activities.* The discussion to date should have made clear that the problems of the chronically ill are less acute in some respects than those of other physically handicapped persons. Wth proper and strict attention to a prescribed regime, a diabetic is excluded from participation

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 32–3.
[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 33.

in few social groups, physically. Indeed, he may not be cut off from any after the diagnosis and establishment of a regime by which he can operate successfully. He is able to communicate with his family; he can attend school; he can join with his friends in whatever interests he may have; he can hold almost any type of job. Physically, the person with impaired heart is less free. After the acute stage of his disease, or after long years of complete rest, he may be able to go to school, to be a member of social groups, to work, but he is usually forced to make more careful choices of activity since he has not the strength to carry on a full program. His choice is limited as to the number and types of social groups. Sports and occupations involving considerable exertion are taboo.

Extended absence from school because of chronic illness is a definite factor handicapping a child in his school progress and possibly erecting a barrier between him and his playmates. This may mean permanent retardation in some instances, although a bright child can usually make up the lost time. In any case, school progress is definitely interrupted by the onset of either diabetes or rheumatic fever.

Greater obstacles to a comfortable adjustment of the diabetic and the cardiac in school are necessary arrangements for certain privileges. The cardiac should not take much exercise and should be careful climbing stairs. The diabetic who must take lunch at school faces the problem of getting enough to eat of the right foods. Clapp and Hardwick, in their study of sixty diabetic school children, found that the long session in high school was one of the biggest stumbling blocks to successful treatment. Lunch might be brought from home, but many "experienced mental suffering because their lunches were different from those of the other children." [26] Teachers and principals were also uncertain as to what attitude they should take toward the children. They were not sure whether they should hold the diabetic and the cardiac child up to normal stand-

[26] Clapp and Hardwick, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

ards or make them objects of more lenient treatment. Clever children, wishing to capitalize on this indecision, secure for themselves special arrangements not required as any part of the treatment program. One boy was playing havoc in school by getting excused from all sorts of activity which he did not enjoy, until the doctor and his parents explained that he was able to do much as the others did.[27]

Any competitive sport is a bad investment for the cardiac although not absolutely precluded in all cases. Most other recreational pursuits which require more than the mildest activity are also precluded. With the diabetic, the situation is quite the reverse. The St. Louis young people engaged in a variety of sports, and one member excelled in basketball and track. Nor are social clubs and recreation of an informal sort forbidden to the diabetic and the cardiac, except, of course, that the latter must avoid too strenuous exercise. Parties proved embarrassing to many diabetics, however, because of their oversensitiveness about the prescribed foods. Two Boy Scouts did not like to go on hikes because they could not eat as the others did. Several young people would stay at home from parties where they would have to expose themselves as being on a diet. In contrast, one attractive young diabetic said it was a byword with the "gang" she went with that Sally was a good person to take out because she couldn't eat a lot and thus proved an inexpensive date. She never minded being different.[28]

Most of the diabetic young people tried to conceal their condition from all except their closest associates, for they felt that they would lose status if their condition were known. The passing of time, and acceptance by persons for whom their regard was high as relatives, intimate friends, and fiancés did much to lessen their feeling of embarrassment on that score.[29] Miss Seltzer concluded that

[27] Seltzer, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 52–3.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 87–9.

17 of 33 young diabetics seemed to be well adjusted, by which she meant that they were able to integrate the regime successfully into their personal, vocational, and social life. The other 16 she considered were not well adjusted; that is, they were not functioning adequately in the various phases of their life. They might be doing well in school or at work, but "were obviously driven by unwholesome needs to compensate for what they felt an inferiority." [80]

We need other studies of persons afflicted with diabetes and heart trouble, in which an attempt is made to get at factors isolating the individual from groups and to compare these with situations among those not afflicted. Such studies should reveal the extent of certain definite measurable factors, such as occupations prohibited, number and kind of groups to which the person belonged before and after the diagnosis of the disease, together with the actual physical disabilities involved. Thus, they would indicate the direction which those working with these persons might take in facilitating their adjustments. As with all problems of this nature, we need to assemble information case by case and group by group until we reach some generalization of importance to sociologists.

*Programs of Treatment and Prevention.* The programs of treatment for the chronic ailments discussed here are of the same type as those discussed in previous chapters, but are somewhat less wide in application. The diabetics have not yet come in for the attention which their condition might well merit, perhaps because the numbers affected are relatively small and treatment under care of private physicians and clinics seems fairly adequate. Provision of treatment for those who cannot afford the insulin and diet is made through the usual channels of special hospital relief funds or through private and public agencies which provide medical care for any illness when need has been demonstrated. No machinery has presumably been set up for early detection and treatment of the diabetic, particularly among children. Physicians emphasize the

[80] Seltzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 89–90.

value of this, since the disease has been repeatedly demonstrated to be controllable. Detection of cases might be achieved through regular health examinations, including urinalysis, but this is not done on a large scale. The regular child-welfare services and other public agencies will treat or secure treatment for cases when discovered, but no pension is provided and no special category of relief established for the diabetics as for some other classes. Some private associations have been active, however. The New York Diabetes Association, in 1934, formulated some guiding principles which Bolduan holds might be incorporated into a public-health program.[31] Some of the points stressed are:

1. To act as a clearinghouse for study of diabetes as a health problem.
2. To assist in forming committees, stimulating co-operation with hospitals in the discovery of persons afflicted.
3. To develop extensive courses for physicians, nurses, teachers, social workers, regarding the nature and effects of the disease.
4. To provide a general health-education program.
5. To attempt a solution of the problem of providing insulin to the indigent.
6. To study the city's needs and facilities for treatment.

The program for heart ailments has been more vigorous, particularly for prevention of heart disease among young children, with emphasis on discovering cases as early as possible and instituting treatment promptly. Regular medical examinations in certain school systems have brought to light many children with cardiac involvements, and the number of examinations is increasing. Once the condition is established, school and public-health nursing and hospital facilities for those who cannot pay are provided, with continued treatment and follow-up work arranged as needed. Inasmuch as cardiac cases among children are found chiefly among those on the lower economic levels, the provision of free care and

[31] Bolduan, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–6. By permission of the American Public Health Association.

free medical examinations is essential. Further care is frequently provided, under both public and private auspices, through convalescent homes, special outdoor schools, and special diets in children's own homes. Studies cited previously in this chapter, showing incidence of rheumatic heart diseases among school children, have resulted from systematic attempts to locate heart ailments in their early stages. The number of cases so discovered has suggested compulsory physical examinations, but the costs have as yet been too great to make possible any routine procedures on a large scale.

In general, the educational program for diabetic or cardiac children need not be altered because of their condition, nor do special skills, such as the arts of lip reading and the reading of braille, have to be taught. The school must simply provide for carrying on the prescribed regime. The diabetic fits into this better than the cardiac patient who frequently needs longer rest periods than do the regular pupils. Those dealing with both the diabetic and the cardiac, as with other groups of handicapped children, urge the mingling of these with the regular pupils in so far as possible, in order to minimize their differences and allow them to have as many mutual experiences as possible. Frequently, individual adjustments may be made without providing special facilities. In many large cities, where cardiac conditions among children are numerous, special classes and outdoor schools are provided for the pupils, where their physical condition is watched carefully by the school nurse. Attention to nutrition, by the serving of special lunches at school and by securing the family's co-operation in regard to proper diet, is also stressed. As the child grows older, vocational training is considered, that he may be guided along lines which may be profitable and suitable for him.

The vocational phase of the problem, as has been intimated, is coming to be cared for more adequately by the Federal Rehabilitation Service which includes in its programs placement of cardiac and diabetic cases in jobs. This may require, as with other phys-

ically handicapped persons, a retraining process if the affliction has developed well along in the wage earner's life. There seems to be some correlation between society's provision for certain types of folks and the limitations of avenues for economic support. The greater the limitation the more pity aroused in our culture, so that we make up to persons thus prevented from competing on so-called equal terms with their fellow men.

Perhaps, in the discussion of administrative programs and educational provisions, we have neglected the most fundamental of all programs going on currently, namely, the medical one. The advance in medical treatment, in understanding the nature of these ailments and their concomitant effects, has been remarkable, perhaps more so with diabetes than with heart conditions. Experiments with different amounts of insulin, of various diets—high-fat, low-carbohydrate, and low-fat diets—are adding greatly to the store of knowledge of the former disease and the ways of circumventing its severity and possible fatality. Similar research and experimentation, with less spectacular results to date, have occurred in the field of heart diseases. Nothing but praise for the rate at which medical science forges ahead can be felt toward the diagnostic and treatment side of the program. But society, at least those members who see so constantly the end results of cases not detected soon enough, sometimes get impatient at our limited progress on the preventive side. Studies associating heart conditions with undernourishment, low economic standards, unsanitary conditions, and overcrowding have made some socially minded persons feel that the conditions which have been in part responsible might stand reviewing. Ultimately, the improvement in living conditions should affect the incidence of these and other diseases and hence their resulting influence on the victims.

## Suggested Readings

*Diabetes*

Bolduan, C. F., "Diabetes—An Important Public Health Problem," *American Journal of Public Health*, 28 (1938), 21–36. A brief, illuminating account of the public-health aspect of diabetes, with some figures on prevalence of the disease, and a suggested program of action.

Clapp, Mary A., and Hardwick, Rachel L., "The Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus—A Study of the Home and School Relationships," *Hospital Social Service*, 22 (1930), 287–96. A case study of the adjustments necessitated by the regime of 60 diabetic children in home and school.

Joslin, Elliot P., Dublin, Louis I., and Marks, Herbert H., "Studies in Diabetes Mellitus, Part II, Its Incidence and the Factors Underlying Its Variations," *American Journal of Medical Sciences*, 187 (1934), 433–57. Excellent data on incidence of diabetes in various classifications, particularly occupations.

Reynolds, Robert D., "In the Shadow of the Needle—A Diabetic Patient Looks at Life," *Hygeia*, 11 (1933), 688–91. Popularly written personal account of problems of a diabetic in his social relationships.

*Heart Diseases*

Jones, T. Duckett, "Heart Disease in Childhood," *American Journal of Public Health*, 28 (1938), 637–43. Brief summary of the seriousness of cardiac conditions among children, and possible preventive measures.

Stroud, William D., "The Rehabilitation and Placement in Industry of Those Handicapped with Cardiovascular Disease," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 105 (1935), 1401–05. Examines problems of placing cardiacs in industry and gives some results of efforts in Philadelphia.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Handicapped Child*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933, vol. IV-B, "Heart Disease," pp. 229–50. Most complete account of heart conditions among children, with statistics regarding incidence, causes, and summary of treatment and preventive measures.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Write the life story of a diabetic or cardiac patient personally known. Follow instructions previously given.

2. Devise a chart which can be used in comparing the social experience of various kinds of persons suffering from chronic ailments such as diabetes and diseases of the heart. Compare these with other types of handicapped persons.

3. From the local or state health department, secure data as to the known incidence and mortality from diabetes and diseases of the heart.

4. Arrange a conference with a medical social worker or physician to discuss social aspects of these diseases. Ask particularly how these diseases seem to affect the patients' attitudes, occupations, family life, participation in interest groups. What attitudes and behavior do other persons display toward the patients?

5. Secure data from the American Heart Association regarding the incidence and mortality of heart ailments during the past two decades. Notice the ages of persons afflicted. Also secure information regarding the program of the Association with reference to its possible effects on the social participation of persons with heart ailments.

6. Consult medical journals and clinics as to advances in medical science which may tend to minimize or eliminate some of the present obstacles to social participation on the part of the diabetic.

7. As in previous chapters, inquire of commercial and industrial establishments as to whether they have any restrictions regarding the hiring of diabetics and cardiac patients. Classify the reasons given.

8. Inquire of the local employment offices and vocational-rehabilitation bureaus as to the number of diabetics and cardiacs on their lists, and number placed in industry. Was retraining necessary? What restrictions, if any, were placed on the type of employment?

# *Chapter 8*

# CONTAGIOUS DISEASES: THE TUBERCULOUS

THE persistence of a physical condition which must invariably exert some influence over one's entire life was seen in the previous discussion of diabetes and heart ailments. Like them, tuberculosis remains ever present. It can be arrested entirely, although the possibility of a recurrence is always there. Besides its chronicity, another insidious characteristic is the relative ease with which it is transmitted from one person to another. The immediate cause of tuberculosis has been fixed as an organism called the tubercle bacillus. Not a fast worker, this powerful bacillus is persistent and spreads with devastating results, frequently without recovery. It may be transmitted to those with whom the infected person comes in contact, providing the resistance of the person attacked cannot combat it. The severe physical deterioration resulting from tuberculosis at its height usually requires extended periods of hospitalization.

The factor of isolation, of long periods of treatment usually in institutions with others similarly suffering, cannot leave the individual unscathed. Separation from familiar associates, transfer to an unfamiliar environment, interruption of work, and enforced periods of inactivity have wrought havoc with many. Yet others have come out victorious in the struggle. What are some of the factors involved? How is the social life of the victim limited? What adjustments must be made vocationally and recreationally? Again, we look first at some actual situations.

### Dr. Edward L. Trudeau [1]

In the annals of tuberculosis and the progress in treatment of the tuberculous, Dr. Trudeau's name is one which commands respect and admiration, and to any traveler in the Adirondacks the Trudeau sanatorium is a present reminder of the work of this early fighter against the ravages of the disease. Dr. Trudeau was born in New York City, in 1848, of French parentage, but he went to Paris with his mother and her family when quite young, after the separation of his parents. He grew up abroad with a beloved older brother. When young Edward was eighteen, he and his brother returned to New York to complete their education. Trudeau was about to enter the Naval Academy when his older brother was taken sick with what was then called consumption. Trudeau instantly gave up his educational plans and went home to nurse his dearly loved brother. During this nursing period, he was in constant contact with his brother, sleeping in the same room with him. Furthermore, the windows were never opened because fresh air was thought harmful.

After Trudeau recovered from his great sorrow at his brother's inevitable death, he decided that he would become a physician, and entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. During his student days, he developed a cold abscess which was treated but was not recognized as a possible manifestation of tuberculosis. At the end of his training period, Dr. Trudeau married, and, in Europe on his honeymoon, suffered from a swelling of the lymph nodes on his neck, but again this was not thought of as another manifestation of tuberculosis. After his return to America, Trudeau started to practice medicine with an older-established physician, but was troubled with general debility and frequent fevers. The latter he attributed to malaria. Finally, he consented to be examined, and the doctors told him he had tuberculosis. The diagnosis proved a great shock, for at that time tuberculosis meant a sentence of death. Few lived through the dread disease, although the time span varied with individuals.

Trudeau and his wife at first tried going south at the advice of physicians, but since the doctor was very active, his fever continued. He went back to New York, then decided to go to the Adirondacks, for he liked the out of doors and felt, since he had not long to live, it would be pleasant to die there. Dr. Trudeau spent from May until September in the

[1] The material for this account of Dr. Trudeau's life is taken from J. Arthur Myers, *Fighters of Fate* (1927), pp. 182–209, by permission of the Williams and Wilkins Company.

mountains, resting, eating good food, leading a life almost entirely in the open. His symptoms disappeared. Hence, he went back to New York, where they quickly returned. Next, he tried a winter in St. Paul, Minnesota, where the climate was thought beneficial for those with affected lungs, but the move was not a success, and his sickness returned. The next summer, he returned to the Adirondacks, this time with his family. The following fall, after a most helpful summer, he decided to try a second winter in the mountains. Contrary to all expectations, he continued to improve to such an extent that the next summer he was able to practice medicine locally among the natives and summer guests. The following winter, he moved to Saranac Lake, but later returned to Paul Smith's where he had been the previous summer. As his health continually improved, several invalids also stricken with tuberculosis came to Saranac, and the town began to grow. It was not until 1882, however, when he read of Brehmer's Sanatorium in Silesia and Brehmer's and Dettweiler's view of the treatment of tuberculosis, which coincided with what he had found through experience, that he thought of starting a sanatorium in Saranac, designed especially for persons of moderate means.

While the plans for the sanatorium were growing and Trudeau was trying to raise money for it, Koch's discovery of the tubercle bacillus brought epoch-making changes in the treatment of the disease. Dr. Trudeau secured the report, studied bacteriology, set up a little laboratory, and worked at isolating and staining the bacillus. He performed a number of experiments in the cure of the disease by inoculating rabbits, letting some run wild and keeping others in unhygienic places. Those that ran wild lived, and the others died. Meanwhile, he proceeded with the building of the little one-room house which was the first part of the sanatorium. His first patients were two factory workers with far-advanced cases of tuberculosis. This first building, known as the "Little Red House" is now a landmark, but the sanatorium has grown far beyond it and embraces numerous cottages. Later, Dr. Trudeau secured an assistant, and, as time went on, more assistants and more money. His list of patients includes many famous names. Probably the best-known is that of Robert Louis Stevenson.

While he was building his sanatorium and using all his energy to help forward the treatment of tuberculosis, Dr. Trudeau suffered many personal sorrows. His only daughter came home from a school in New York, after one winter there, with an advanced case of tuberculosis. She had

seemed such a healthy girl that it had never occurred to anyone that she might be a victim of the disease. After testing her sputum, Dr. Trudeau knew that she was dangerously ill. Although she lived for five years, she was never well and suffered a great deal before her death. His eldest son became a physician and, urged by his father, opened a practice in New York. But he also died, being suddenly stricken with pneumonia before he had been practicing very long. His second son had died shortly after birth. The third son also became a doctor, and joined his father at Saranac.

Dr. Trudeau received much recognition for his contribution to the knowledge of the cause and cure of tuberculosis. He was the first president of the National Tuberculosis Association, and was once President of the Congress of American Physicians and Surgeons. He also received honors from several universities. Perhaps his greater contribution is his own personal triumph over a disease which threatened to interrupt his career and compel complete isolation from friends and pursuits if not permanent separation in death.

### The Conlon Family

Mrs. Conlon had been warned by the doctor who was head of the local tuberculosis association in the city where she lived that she must take care of herself, take life easier, do less work and less play. Mrs. Conlon meant to co-operate, but it was difficult to do much less work, with two small children below school age and a husband on W.P.A. As for play, they had little enough to spend on any kind of commercial entertainment, but she belonged to a large family, both she and her husband had many friends who were frequently dropping in or on whom they called to pass the evening and have a hospitable cup of coffee or glass of wine.

Mrs. Conlon had never been strong as a child, and her family had been in very straitened circumstances. She went to work at an early age in a factory, working long hours under not too good conditions. Her family paid no particular attention to a balanced diet. Mrs. Conlon had always been very attractive, although thin and pale, with dark hair and large, luminous, dark eyes. She didn't mind working hard during the day because she went dancing nearly every night. She had felt tired and listless for some weeks before she went to the doctor with a troublesome cough. When she was diagnosed as tuberculous, she was sent to the state sanatorium immediately, and remained for a period of about a year when she was discharged and her case pronounced arrested. She was supposed to

continue contact with the doctor and return for periodic checkups on her condition.

Very soon after her release from the sanatorium, Mrs. Conlon married Mr. Conlon. He was earning very little at the time, but Mrs. Conlon had never been used to much, so this did not bother her. She felt fine while carrying the children and after their birth, but the burden of taking care of them and the uncertainty of her husband's income were a great strain upon her. For many months, the family had to accept help from the public-relief agency, and the allowance was insufficient for their needs. Milk was provided for the children because they both had positive tuberculin tests. Mrs. Conlon did not worry greatly about her condition. She felt well much of the time. She took life somewhat as it came and did not ask a lot from it. She liked a good time and had her fun, but she did not neglect her work or her children. She did try to see the doctor regularly, even though getting to his office meant a great effort.

Just what series of events brought about the active recurrence of the disease is difficult to tell. She had become pregnant again, it was summertime, and the weather was very hot. She had been working hard for years and playing, too. Moreover, her sister had come to live with her, and this sister was a very lively girl who spent much time running around at night, besides staying away from school. Mrs. Conlon was worried about her sister's conduct, which she hoped to influence. At any rate, Mrs. Conlon had a miscarriage and lost a great deal of blood. Her old condition then came on very quickly. The doctor wished to send her to the sanatorium, but Mrs. Conlon would not go. She promised to rest at home while her sister would do the housework and take care of the children. A number of weeks went by and Mrs. Conlon got no better. Try as she might, she could not seem to rest. When she did decide to go to the sanatorium, no bed was available, and she had to wait another three weeks. She had been in the sanatorium about six weeks when she had a hemorrhage and died.

Mrs. Conlon left behind her two little children susceptible to tuberculosis, who needed careful watching lest the disease get the better of them. Mrs. Conlon's sister was undeniably irresponsible and did not desire the job of housekeeper for her brother-in-law. No grandmother was available on either side. Mr. Conlon was an ineffectual person who was quite dependent on his wife for the management of the house and of the children, although he also resisted help from social agencies. His extreme fondness for the children might be counted on as an aid in planning for

their care. Furthermore, tuberculosis had taken one life from his family, and he would guard against its repetition.

We have seen in the two stories presented that, although better for short periods of time, both Mrs. Conlon and Dr. Trudeau were never completely cured. Dr. Trudeau was able to live longer with his affliction because he gave his attention to his condition and tried to do all he could to keep himself fit. Mrs. Conlon, on the other hand, deceived in part by her apparent health for a period of several years, and fighting against the odds of low income, much work, and worry, did not do as much for herself as she might have. Hence the severe recurrence. Tuberculosis proves a formidable enemy, and any individual whose body the bacilli invade needs to marshal all his forces to combat and conquer them.

As noted above, the discovery of the immediate cause of tuberculosis—the tubercle bacillus—came during Trudeau's life. It was then for the first time that the contagious nature of the disease was established. Although the germ does not strike as quickly as that of measles or scarlet fever, it nevertheless has an insidious approach, and the modern treatment provides for careful checkup of all those who live or have lived in contact with an active case of tuberculosis. Thus all of Mrs. Conlon's family were examined both by the tuberculin test and by the X ray. The children reacted positively to tuberculin tests, indicating that they were susceptible to the disease, but X rays did not show any shadow in the chest. The clinic will keep their record and perform periodic rechecks on them. In Dr. Trudeau's case, his daughter contracted tuberculosis even though presumably great care was taken of her and she had seemed very healthy. It is noticeable that, at that time, the system of early checking by X ray and the tuberculin test had not been developed, so that the family could not have known in advance the degree of susceptibility of any member. Since tuberculosis is a germ disease, every case must have been infected by someone having the

disease; hence the emphasis on examining a diagnosed patient's family.

As in all other conditions which we have studied, the economic motif runs through the history of the tuberculous. The condition is aggravated by poor surroundings, unhealthful atmosphere, and lack of wholesome diet. Crowded and unclean conditions foster the development of the disease by lowering the resistance of the individual. No doubt the poor circumstances of the Conlons added to Mrs. Conlon's poor health and need for special care of the children. The expense for medical and sanatorium care is another item more serious in Dr. Trudeau's time—who indeed struggled to make the facilities available for those who were not favored economically—than in the time of the Conlons, when state facilities were provided for those not otherwise able to afford care. The only limitation lies in the number of beds available, for it is rarely that facilities are available for all who are eligible, and frequently a waiting period is necessitated as it was in Mrs. Conlon's case. This lack of sufficient sanatorium facilities, even though the increase is gratifying, has led to the stressing of proper care at home.

Certain aspects of tuberculosis are significant for their bearing on the problem of social participation. The prolonged absence from home may serve to change the nature of the relationships there as well as produce unrest and emotional tension on the part of the patient. The disease, because of its wearing physical effects, may limit the person's activity and thus circumscribe rather precisely the type of work group which is open to him. Progress arresting the disease is lengthening this radius. The fear of contagion is a factor not present in other diseases yet discussed, which may make the tuberculous person shunned by other persons. The uneasiness of others in his presence, if not actual exclusion from certain groups, cannot but affect the person involved. In the two cases described here, fear of contagion did not prove a barrier, although Dr. Trudeau remarked, in urging his son to practice elsewhere

than at Saranac, "I was beginning already to realize the stigma with which the world stamps everything and everybody connected with tuberculosis." [2]

*Incidence of Tuberculosis.* Physicians and public-health workers may justly be proud of progress made in the understanding and treatment of tuberculosis, formerly called the "Great White Plague." Prior to the isolation of the tubercle bacillus by Koch, a diagnosis of consumption meant sure death. For years, tuberculosis led all other diseases in fatalities. From a death rate of 202 per 100,000 population in 1900,[3] the rate has diminished to 49 per

Table 13

MORTALITY FROM TUBERCULOSIS AMONG THE NEGRO AND WHITE POPULATION [a]

Death rate per 100,000 population

| *Date* | *Total* | *White* | *Colored* | *Ratio of Colored to White* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1910 | 160.3 | 148.3 | 447.7 | 3.0 |
| 1920 | 114.0 | 100.0 | 262.2 | 2.6 |
| 1930 | 71.5 | 58.3 | 175.2 | 3.0 |
| 1931 | 68.1 | 53.8 | 180.6 | 3.4 |
| 1932 | 62.8 | 49.9 | 164.1 | 3.3 |
| 1933 | 59.5 | 47.2 | 156.4 | 3.3 |
| 1934 | 56.6 | 45.0 | 147.5 | 3.3 |
| 1935 | 55.0 | 44.8 | 144.6 | 3.2 |
| 1936 | 55.7 | 44.9 | 151.1 | 3.4 |
| 1937 [b] | 53.6 | | | |

[a] National Tuberculosis Association, *Report of the Committee on Tuberculosis Among Negroes* (1937), p. 12. Original data and revised figures used by permission of the National Tuberculosis Association.

[b] Figures for 1935, 1936, and 1937 from *Public Health Reports* (U. S. Public Health Service Bulletin No. 54 [1939]), p. 1048.

[2] J. Arthur Myers, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

[3] Jessamine Whitney, *Facts and Figures about Tuberculosis* (1931), p. 5.

100,000 for tuberculosis of the respiratory system and 4.6 per 100,000 for all other forms,[4] a decrease of 75 per cent. The most spectacular reductions occurred in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The rate at which the mortality figures are decreasing has been slowed, but is still going down, as the figures in Table 13 indicate.

Table 13 also illustrates one striking characteristic of tuberculosis, its high incidence among the Negro population. Study after study shows always the percentage of colored persons afflicted to be approximately three times that of whites in the same community. Various reasons have been offered for this excess. On the whole, investigators believe that there is some racial factor because of which immunity is not highly developed, that there is an economic factor (since the disease flourishes among persons living in unwholesome environment, without the proper food), and, thirdly, that, in many states in which Negroes make up a large percentage of the population, adequate facilities for treatment and prevention are definitely lacking, so that the disease spreads rapidly.[5] Studies among the Mexican population, many of whom live under unsavory conditions in congested areas, have revealed a high incidence of tuberculosis.

The death rate from tuberculosis is slightly higher for white males than for white females, whereas among the colored population, the rate is higher among the females. At certain ages, however, the death rate of women is higher than for men in both groups, particularly among adolescent girls, presumably owing to physiological changes.[6]

[4] *Public Health Reports* (U. S. Public Health Service Bulletin No. 54 [1939]), p. 79.

[5] For a discussion of the racial factors see National Tuberculosis Association, *Report of the Committee on Tuberculosis Among Negroes* (1937), and George D. Williams and Joseph D. Applewhite, "Tuberculosis in the Negroes of Georgia," *American Journal of Hygiene*, 29 (1939), 61–110. Both contain good bibliographies.

[6] Whitney, *op. cit.*, p. 13, and H. E. Kleinschmidt, *Tuberculosis* (1937), pp. 8–9.

Not only among women but among the population as a whole, death strikes more frequently those stricken with the disease at an early age. The largest number of deaths from tuberculosis oc-

Table 14

AGE AT DEATH FROM TUBERCULOSIS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1936 [a]

| *Age Groups* | *Deaths from Tuberculosis* |
|---|---|
| All ages | 71,527 |
| Under 5 | 1,982 |
| 5–9 | 682 |
| 10–14 | 1,125 |
| 15–19 | 4,178 |
| 20–24 | 7,534 |
| 25–29 | 8,011 |
| 30–34 | 7,089 |
| 35–39 | 7,046 |
| 40–44 | 6,595 |
| 45–49 | 6,166 |
| 50–54 | 5,306 |
| 55–59 | 4,525 |
| 60–64 | 3,744 |
| 65–69 | 3,140 |
| 70–74 | 2,093 |
| 75–79 | 1,401 |
| 80–84 | 564 |
| 85–89 | 227 |
| 90 and over | 49 |
| Unknown | 70 |

[a] National Tuberculosis Association, Release B-332, 1938.

curs during the years 25 to 29, with the second largest number of deaths occurring between the ages of 20 and 24. Tuberculosis thus has the most devastating effect on persons in the prime of life, and is a less serious menace to the very young and the very old.

Like many another disease, tuberculosis is not of equal incidence

in the various states in the Union. During 1936, New York, California, and Massachusetts reported greater numbers of fatalities than did other states. On the basis of rates per 100,000 of population, the situation is different. The high prevalence of the disease among the colored members brings all the Southern states high in the list when death rates are considered. Also states in which numerous sanatoria are located, whose climate has been vaunted for its healing qualities, such as New York, Arizona, and California, have very high death rates, swollen, of course, by their nonresident population. Since many of these migrants are beyond

Table 15

TEN HIGHEST STATES IN MORTALITY FROM TUBERCULOSIS IN TOTAL POPULATION AND IN WHITE POPULATION

(Per 100,000)

| *Total Population* [a] | | *White Population* [b] | |
|---|---|---|---|
| District of Columbia | 106.6 | Arizona | 348.1 |
| Tennessee | 87.5 | New Mexico | 184.4 |
| Maryland | 82.9 | Colorado | 106.6 |
| Louisiana | 72.6 | Tennessee | 83.6 |
| Virginia | 66.6 | Kentucky | 82.3 |
| Alabama | 63.9 | Nevada | 75.7 |
| North Carolina | 60.6 | California | 70.7 |
| New York | 58.4 | Maryland | 65.4 |
| Georgia | 55.1 | Vermont | 61.6 |
| West Virginia | 54.4 | New York | 60.3 |

[a] "Mortality in Certain States during 1936, with Comparative Data for Recent Years," *Public Health Reports,* 52 (1937), 595. (Figures in this column for 1936 only.)

[b] L. L. Lumsden and C. C. Dauer, "Geographical Distribution of Mortality from Tuberculosis, Cancer, Appendicitis, and Typhoid Fever in the White Populations of the United States," *Public Health Reports,* 52 (1937), 792. (Figures are averages for the five-year period 1929–1933.)

recovery when they seek a miraculous cure, the death rates are exceptionally high. Much interest has been manifested in the geographical distribution of tuberculosis by those organizing to combat the disease. Table 15 compares states of high mortality for the population as a whole and for the white population only. Certain states stand out in both classifications, e. g., Tennessee, Maryland, and New York. New York is understandably high, with its sanatoria at Saranac Lake and its large urban population, both Negro and white, living in congested areas. No state had a death rate to compare with the white mortality for Arizona, but this is explicable on the basis of the large numbers going there for a "cure." Maryland and Tennessee rates, on the other hand, cannot be explained because of residents of other states trekking there for pure air and sanatorium care. Yet they appear to be areas in which, for some reason, tuberculosis flourishes. A study in which deaths among the white population were plotted county by county showed a definite sore spot in the Tennessee-Kentucky area, with tentacles stretching out to Maryland, to southern Illinois and Indiana, and north to New York and across Vermont.[7] Proffered explanations for this peculiarity were not considered adequate.

Unlike the health conditions considered previously, tuberculosis is reportable, and at any time one can ascertain the number of cases recorded during the preceding week in the reports of the United States Public Health Service. The actual number of cases, compared with some other diseases, is not formidable but is significantly high. Because of its potentially devastating effect on a person's physical well-being, and the large number of deaths in proportion to those afflicted, tuberculosis is taken very seriously. During the year 1936, a total of 96,731 new cases of tuberculosis were reported, and the deaths during the same year amounted to 70,918.[8]

[7] C. C. Dauer, "Distribution of Tuberculosis Mortality in the White Population of the United States," *Public Health Reports*, 52 (1937), 70–75.

[8] *Public Health Reports*, 54 (1939), 79.

This is about one third the number of cases of syphilis reported for the same period. On the other hand, the deaths from syphilis are definitely fewer. Many of the cases of tuberculosis are not detected until the disease has reached an advanced stage. Attempts have been made to educate the public to recognize early symptoms and take precautions, and also to "find" cases in their incipient stages. The "case-finding" procedure is costly since it involves inoculation by either Mantoux or von Pirquet test, and possible X rays. Studies of school children have shown that, when tests were applied, an appreciable percentage of the children showed positive reactions. The incidence depended, of course, on areas from which the children were drawn, for those economically well favored are less susceptible. As brought out in Table 16, the percentage of

Table 16

INCIDENCE OF TUBERCULOSIS AMONG CHILDREN IN THE U.S. [a]

| *Place of Study* | *Date* | *Age Spread* | *No. Examined* | *No. Positive* | *Per Cent Positive* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Massachusetts | 1924–27 | 5–15 | 42,071 | 11,741 | 28 |
| Philadelphia | 1926 | 3–20 | 4,107 | 3,020 | 74 |
| New York City | 1912–16 | 0–14 | 1,695 | 1,092 | 64 |
| New York City | 1921–28 | 0–13 | 7,668 | 1,286 | 17 |
| St. Louis | 1912–15 | 0–14 | 1,321 | 426 | 32 |
| St. Louis | 1912–15 | 0–14 | 1,125 | 236 | 21 |
| North Carolina—White | 1926–28 | Under 15 | 22,550 | 4,976 | 22 |
| North Carolina—Colored | 1926–28 | Under 15 | 2,498 | 683 | 27 |
| Minnesota | 1923 | School | 1,654 | 171 | 10 |
| Iowa | 1929 | 0–16 | 1,356 | 225 | 17 |

[a] Jessamine Whitney, *Facts and Figures about Tuberculosis* (1931), p. 41. Data used by permission of the National Tuberculosis Association.

children showing positive reactions has varied from 10 per cent of those examined to 74 per cent, but most of the figures are nearer

25 per cent. If we may expect even 20 per cent of the school population to be susceptible to tuberculosis, it would be foolish to relax in our programs for prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

*Family Relationships of the Tuberculous.* Information regarding incidence and mortality from tuberculosis shows that the greatest toll is taken from persons in young adulthood or early middle life. Many of these persons thus have been married and some have children. Enforced separation for treatment in sanatoria brings with it concomitant problems of adjustment for the one institutionalized as well as for those left behind. If the victim is a breadwinner, financial difficulties in providing medical care and in supporting dependents must be reckoned with. If the victim is a mother, the father may be faced with the dilemma of assuming the dual role of father and mother or of trying to adjust to a mother substitute either in the person of a relative or a paid housekeeper.

Whatever the family group left behind, the tuberculous individual enters his new environment with considerable anxiety. Investigation of the mental attitudes of 75 tuberculous patients in a sanatorium revealed marked despondency.[9] The doctors who interviewed the inmates wished to determine whether or not the alleged euphoric acceptance of fate by the tuberculous was actually present. They found that only seven had apparently happy and wholesome outlooks, and they even questioned one or two of these. Thirty-five were "fatalistic," trying to make the best of it, twenty-nine were definitely depressed by their condition, and four had pronounced fluctuations in mood from depression to enthusiasm. Several causes of anxiety accounted for the findings, chiefly worry over finances and apprehension regarding families. Economic "headaches" were produced because they could not pay their expenses or were using up their savings, because they felt humiliated

[9] Edward A. Strecker, Francis J. Braceland, and Burgess Gordon, "Mental Attitudes of Tuberculous Patients," *Mental Hygiene*, 22 (1938), 529–43.

in receiving free care, because they were losing out industrially and could never make up the time, and because their families were suffering on their account.[10] But the separation was producing a growing fear in some that their families were getting used to living without them and would not be welcoming them home. Failure to visit, or increase in time between visits, on the part of loved ones was interpreted as a diminution of affection. Some patients just could not rest easily for fear their place in the family group was being usurped.[11]

Pertinent findings on this matter were yielded by a small study made at Robert Koch Tuberculosis Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri.[12] The study was purposely set up to identify such anxieties on the part of white married men institutionalized because of tuberculosis. All had been wage earners and entirely self-supporting prior to hospitalization. Causes of financial worry were all too evident: of the twenty-five situations studied, only seven families were able subsequently to get along without financial aid from either relatives or social agencies. Only six of the wives had worked previously, but fourteen were found to be employed when the study was made. Economic pressure was evident in other ways. All but seven families moved to smaller quarters or doubled up with relatives. Eight of the ten families owning automobiles sold these. Seven families sold their furniture. Nine out of twenty-two families owning radios sold them.

In addition to the financial strain, the investigator found the relationship between husband and wife usually suffered considerably. Shifting to the wife the responsibility for support as well as guidance and discipline of the children proved too much for some women. In three instances, the wife, an unusually dependent person, blamed her husband for his physical condition and for the

[10] Strecker, *et al.*, in *Mental Hygiene*, 22 (1938), 533.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 538.

[12] Robert F. Manlove, "Family Changes due to Hospitalization of White Husbands" (unpublished manuscript in the possession of the authors, 1937).

cares he had thus thrust upon her, and turned to her own or his relatives for support. In four cases, on the other hand, the women enjoyed getting out into the business world, and became very independent of their mates. Two of these subsequently obtained divorces. All told, in eleven out of twenty-five instances there seemed to be evidence of estrangement between husband and wife due to his hospitalization and her withdrawal from him. The relationship between the father and his children also appeared unsatisfactory in many instances, presumably because of the continued absence of the father and infrequent visits with him. In several situations, the child turned to someone else to fill the role which had been the father's.

Certainly these findings, small though the study is, are evidence of liability of a shift in group relationships brought about by some drastic change, such as the hospitalization of marriage partners. The facts presented reinforce the general impression of mental attitudes gained from the other study and indicate that the patients have basic causes for worry regarding what is happening back home. If the absence from the family circle for necessary treatment changes the role of husband to dependent and that of wife to wage earner, and if it causes withdrawal of the mate and children, the social consequences of the disease are far-reaching indeed. It is not unusual to find patients resisting institutionalization because of worries about those they may leave behind. Furthermore, numbers leave sanatoria against the advice of physicians because of these same anxieties.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* The relation of tuberculosis to wealth and income is easily determined in a general sort of way. But it is hard to discover whether low economic status contributes more or less to the development of tuberculosis than this disease contributes to poverty. In any case, it is the poor who most frequently acquire tuberculosis. This means, as we shall show in Chapter 12, that they are limited in the range of group mem-

berships and in cultural participation. It is reasonable to assume that appearance of the disease further reduces their economic margin and their share in social life. Some of the relevant evidence may be presented.

In a Cleveland study made in 1932, average monthly rental was compared with incidence of tuberculosis. The study demonstrated clearly a relation between this measure of economic status and the presence of the disease. The figures were especially striking in the case of the Negro families. (See Table 17.) This relationship has

Table 17

MONTHLY RENTAL AND MORTALITY FROM TUBERCULOSIS [a]

| *Equivalent Monthly Rental* | *Adjusted Tuberculosis Death Rate* | |
|---|---|---|
| | *White* | *Negro* |
| Under $20 | 127 | 550 |
| $20–25 | 78 | 531 |
| 25–30 | 74 | 390 |
| 30–35 | 55 | 284 |
| 35–40 | 48 | 238 |
| 40–45 | 45 | 221 |

[a] Howard W. Green, *Tuberculosis and the Economic Strata, Cleveland's Five-City Area* (1932), p. 5. Data used by permission of the author.

been frequently demonstrated. Examination of occupations of persons dying from tuberculosis showed that those represented most frequently were in the lower economic group.[13] A careful study of 676 patients over a three-year period, from 1923 to 1926, made by the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, revealed that 75 per cent of the group studied had been previously em-

[13] Whitney, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

ployed as laborers, 18 per cent had been clerical workers, and seven per cent had had professional or executive status.[14] The same study revealed further that, of 140 who were working at the time investigation was undertaken, 46 per cent were earning less than $20 per week, and 30 per cent were earning between $20 and $30 per week.[15] These were predepression earnings at a time when wage rates were generally higher than in the subsequent period. Examination of 1,288 families in 1928, made by the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, with the support of the Milbank Fund, showed that 77 per cent of the families in which a diagnosis of tuberculosis had been made were already known to various social agencies. The remaining 23 per cent were economically stable.[16] The same social agency found that, in the 566 families known to its Tuberculosis Division in March, 1938, financial need existed, so that the agency concluded, "it is quite impossible to arrest and control tuberculosis on a family budget inadequate for the simplest requirements of food, clothing, housing and the necessities of life no matter how much effort is spent on medical diagnosis, medical treatment, nursing supervision or sanatorium and hospital care." [17]

Causes contributing to the high tuberculosis death rate among Negroes are the generally unsatisfactory conditions among which they live, and the inadequate facilities for treating them. An exhaustive investigation of tuberculosis among the Negroes of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1931–1933 showed appalling living conditions: overcrowding, sharing of common household necessities, sharing beds with active tuberculous patients, lack of proper diet,

[14] Alice C. Klein and Grant Thorburn, *Employment of the Tuberculous* (1928), p. 23. Data used by permission of the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, Inc.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[16] Bailey B. Burritt, "Problems in Control of Tuberculosis," *Bulletin*, National Tuberculosis Association, 24 (1938), 99. By permission of the National Tuberculosis Association.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 100.

sunlight, and sanitary conveniences.[18] The economic conditions of the 4,245 families covered by this study re-emphasized the old story: the poorer the circumstances the greater the incidence of tuberculosis. This survey, which was made during the depression, revealed that 60.8 per cent of the 3,616 persons of employable age in these families were out of work.[19]

A study of tuberculosis among Negroes in Georgia, particularly in Macon, revealed similar low economic status and generally crowded, unhealthy living conditions. A large proportion of the Macon Negroes studied were receiving aid from private or governmental sources. In regard to the physical environment, the authors state "that there are generally more persons in the household than there are rooms in the house; that 30 to 40 per cent of the households average more than two non-family members; that in one-sixth to one-fifth of the households there are more than two persons (probably children) to a bed and that in about three-quarters of the cases, there is only sufficient space for beds to serve the household membership." [20] While these factors were present in both the tuberculous and nontuberculous group, their presence in the former is more serious. No doubt they are partly responsible for the fact that, while the study was in progress, some of those who were originally nontuberculous became tuberculous.

Such are the facts regarding the general economic status of the victims of tuberculosis. If, before contracting the disease, many are poor, inadequately educated,[21] and vocationally untrained, it can be imagined that their prospects in industry after treatment and sanatorium care are not bright. Indeed, the occupational handicap

[18] Elsie Witchen, *Tuberculosis and the Negro in Pittsburgh* (1934), pp. 78–9.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

[20] Williams and Applewhite, *op. cit.*, p. 104. By permission of the *American Journal of Hygiene.*

[21] Material from Klein and Thorburn, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–1, and from Beulah Burhoe, *The Social Adjustment of the Tuberculous* (1934), pp. 48–9, indicates that the average educational attainment of all the persons examined is represented by completion of the eighth grade.

to arrested or inactive tuberculous persons can hardly be magnified. That the disease definitely weakens the physical stamina of the victim and renders him, even after treatment and prolonged hospitalization, incapable of doing many types of work cannot be overlooked. Any job requiring heavy exertion may bring on a return of his condition. Poor air and other bad working conditions may prove dangerous. On the other hand, there are many positions which a person with an arrested case of tuberculosis may perform without harm to himself or anyone else. Besides the actual physical condition of the arrested tuberculous person applying for a job, an additional drawback has been the attitude of prospective employers and co-workers who fear danger of exposure to the disease. This apprehension is being somewhat allayed by efforts of placement bureaus and the general educational campaign regarding tuberculosis.

Of the 676 patients studied by the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, 81 were not eligible for work, mainly because they were still active cases. Of the remaining 595, 386 were em-

Table 18

EARNINGS BEFORE AND AFTER DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS [a]

| *Average Weekly Earnings* | *Before Treatment Per Cent* | *After Treatment Per Cent* |
|---|---|---|
| Less than $20 | 28 | 42 |
| $20–29 | 34 | 33 |
| 30–39 | 25 | 7 |
| 40 and over | 13 | 2 |
| Not stated | .. | 16 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

[a] Klein and Thorburn, *op. cit.*, p. 37. Only those persons actually working were included. Data used by permission of New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, Inc.

ployed for some time, and the remainder did no work. The vocational service found jobs for 267 patients, while 228 found their own employment. Rather significant differences between the experiences of these two groups were apparent. More months of work were found for those placed through the efforts of the bureau, but the patients finding their own jobs received higher wages per month than the others. The average monthly earnings of the latter were $87 compared with $82 earned by the former. The employment bureau was better than the patient in choosing work which was suitable from a medical standpoint. In contrast, fewer discharges and voluntary withdrawals were found among the group securing their own positions. A comparison of all earnings before and after illness and discharge showed a decided differential in favor of the pretuberculosis earnings, although the report points out that a small number earned more than they had before diagnosis.[22]

As with sufferers from other ailments, many of the tuberculous need retraining in an occupation which they may carry on within limits of their physical capacity. Even with such training, the outlook for employment is not bright. The job situation is marked by intense competition, and many able-bodied are not able to find employment. Negro tuberculous persons face even greater odds, for racial discrimination reduces the already limited opportunities for all handicapped. For some time, the expedient of sheltered workshops, such as are used to help the vocational adjustments of other handicapped individuals, has been resorted to for the tuberculous. Advantages are seen in the emotional satisfaction derived from employment. Release from institution is apparently a contributory factor in the success of these ventures. Little need be said about them since, in principle, they are like those for the crippled and the blind: highly subsidized organizations, whereby sick individuals are able to perform, in a protected environment,

[22] All of this material is from Klein and Thorburn, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–42.

certain work commensurate with their physical ability and for which they receive some remuneration. The chief value lies in the intangible therapeutic effect on the patients. No such venture has been self-supporting. One of the earliest of these was the Altro workshop for the Jewish tuberculous. Begun in 1913, the original object was to furnish sewing for persons in the needle trades.[23] Sewing is still the main activity. Other sheltered workshops established in different parts of the country include a variety of activities. Tomahawk Lake Camp in Wisconsin provides a large amount of outdoor work—forestry, woodcutting, building houses, rowboats, and canoes.[24] Half Way House in Colorado Springs teaches handicraft and sells the products. The patients are paid on an hourly basis.[25]

England has gone a step further in planning for the rehabilitation of the tuberculous and has established some villages where families may live together, thus stimulating normal community life. Homes and employment are provided, some jobs naturally growing out of the needs of the group, and patients being placed according to the trades in which they are trained. Frequently, skills are taught while men are residents of a village. Schools are provided for the children. Examples are the villages of Papworth, Preston Hall, and Southfield. The government underwrites the expenses.[26]

Such efforts as the sheltered workshop are sporadic and serve relatively few of the tuberculous. On an average, less than 500 a year are cared for by them. The public rehabilitative programs for all handicapped, which have been mentioned before, are equally open to the tuberculous, and it is estimated that possibly an additional 500 may be retrained there. It is evident that these 1,000

[23] Burhoe, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–1.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[26] S. A. Knopf, *Report to the United States Government on the Tuberculous* (1933), p. 38.

rehabilitated and provided for by some sort of special arrangement are but a tiny fraction of the 150,000 cases discharged each year from sanatoria. Even though estimates have been made that 25 per cent will presumably die in a short time, and another 25 per cent care for themselves, the problems of the 75,000, or remaining 50 per cent, minus the 1,000 for whom some care is given, present a serious challenge.[27] The vocational handicap of the tuberculous can scarcely be exaggerated.

*Programs of Treatment.* Spectacular achievements have been made in the prevention, control, and treatment of tuberculosis, since the mortality rates have been so greatly reduced and various measures for diagnosis and treatment have been applied on such a wide scale. As the life story of Dr. Trudeau indicated, progress was slow for some time. Then it was greatly accelerated with new discoveries as to the nature of the disease, its transmission to others, favorable factors in treatment, and means of detection. Each new discovery or development was an aid in the whole program. Yet the problems of the tuberculous have by no means been solved. Emotional upsets suffered by the patient through his enforced separation from family and friends, the loss of earning power, the difficulties in obtaining a job, and changes in the physical condition itself are still major obstacles in the adjustment process.

Programs of treatment for the tuberculous have followed much the same lines that society has adopted for other physical handicaps. Since 1900, the states have taken an interest in the problem because of the high mortality rates and the assurance that the cause was known and the spread of the disease could be prevented. Under public-health banners, campaigns for early diagnosis have been waged so that the chance of recovery might be increased and the handicap imposed by a severe case of tuberculosis be mitigated or prevented. Increased facilities for care and treatment are yet a crying need, even though Federal aid has augmented existing pro-

[27] Burhoe, *op. cit.*, pp. 28–9.

visions for institutional care. An estimated optimum standard of care calls for two beds in sanatoria per death per annum. The standard has been achieved in only a few states. In 1938, the ratio for the United States as a whole was 1.3 beds per death. The shortage exists chiefly in the Southern and Southeastern states.[28]

Along with the development of sanatoria and other programs of rehabilitation for the tuberculous has come a growing recognition of the social components of the disease. A person may no longer be regarded as purely a medical problem which proper medication can cure. His treatment is promoted or hindered by his worries and anxieties concerning his family and by his ideas and feelings about the disease itself. A greater realization of these problems of social adjustment on the part of the tuberculous has been manifested in many sanatoria. It is also shown by those engaged in aftercare. They are increasingly aware that employment and restoration to community life rest not merely on physical recovery and vocational skills, but also on emotional balance and the attitudes of other people.

Whether sanatorium "graduates" recover the degree of social participation they had before hospitalization, we do not know. Study of a few hundred representative cases should indicate the answer to this question. Whether persons with arrested cases of tuberculosis achieve a greater or smaller share in group life than those who have never had this disease can also be learned only by research not yet initiated. Obviously, institutionalization isolates the patients; even home care cuts them off from many social and economic activities. But medical social service reduces the degree of isolation, maintains some contacts, and facilitates participation in the affairs of family, community, and the wider social order. Tuberculosis obviously involves a social handicap, but limitations it imposes have not yet been measured.

[28] H. E. Kleinschmidt, "Tuberculosis," *Social Work Year Book, 1939*, p. 446.

## Suggested Readings

Burhoe, Beulah W., *The Social Adjustment of the Tuberculous.* New York: National Tuberculosis Association, 1934. Contains some indication of the social factors in the treatment of tuberculosis and describes various types of special occupational and vocational therapy.

Jacobs, Philip P., *The Control of Tuberculosis in the United States.* New York: National Tuberculosis Association, 1932. An excellent historical treatment of the public-health aspect of tuberculosis, and methods of prevention and control.

Klein, Alice Campbell and Thorburn, Grant, *Employment of the Tuberculous.* New York: New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, 1928. Results of three years' (1923–1926) intensive work with a group of 676 arrested tuberculous patients, trying to secure employment for them.

Kleinschmidt, H. E., "Tuberculosis," *Social Work Year Book, 1939,* pp. 445–9. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Brief account of various aspects of tuberculosis. Bibliography.

Myers, J. Arthur, *Fighters of Fate.* Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Company, 1927. "A story of men and women who have achieved greatly despite the great white plague."

National Tuberculosis Association, *Report of the Committee on Tuberculosis Among Negroes.* New York, 1937. Comprehensive report on incidence of tuberculosis, treatment facilities, and opportunities for Negroes. Good bibliography.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, vol. IV-B, *The Handicapped Child,* pp. 198–229, "Tuberculosis." New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933. Incidence of tuberculosis among children, problems of treatment and prevention.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Write the life history of an acquaintance now suffering from tuberculosis or in whom the disease has been arrested. As before, emphasize changing participation in social groups and cultural activities.

2. Compare the social relations of tuberculous persons with those of diabetics and cardiacs. Is there evidence that they differ quantitatively? qualitatively? In making such comparisons, use the results of social-

participation scores, charts of individual cases, and any other devices that may seem helpful.

3. If there is a local organization specially concerned with tuberculosis (tuberculosis society, clinic, preventorium, sanitarium), secure a report, arrange an interview, or plan a visit. Remember that clinics and hospitals are not zoos. Inquire particularly about the socioeconomic status of patients before and after onset of the disease.

4. Inquire of commercial and industrial establishments whether they knowingly employ persons who have had tuberculosis. Ask particularly whether they re-employ persons who have had to drop out on account of the disease. Note any objections that may be offered to such employment.

5. From the appropriate state department, secure available data concerning incidence and mortality, facilities for treatment, programs for prevention. Examine similar data from the National Tuberculosis Association.

6. Give a social-participation test to sanitarium "graduates." Arrangements for this will doubtless have to be made through a tuberculosis society or the social-service department of a sanitarium. As before, score, tabulate, and compare results with those from other groups.

7. Perhaps an individual student might attempt a separate study of some patients in a tuberculosis sanitarium, with special attention to changes in family relationships after institutionalization. Include such items as these: frequency of visits to patient, frequency of letters, employment of wife (if patient is husband), employment of children, changes in family budget, changes in recreation, changes of residence, evidence of domestic harmony or discord. This must be carefully planned; the permission and co-operation of the director of the sanitarium secured in advance. It would be best for this purpose to select patients who have been at the institution for at least six months.

8. Another individual project might deal with those patients who leave a sanitarium against the advice of the doctors. A study of reasons given by the patients, especially those relating to social and economic situations, might be made.

9. Get evidence from the lives of the men and women described by Myers in *Fighters of Fate* and compare these with the personal life histories assembled under question 1.

# *Chapter 9*

# VENEREAL DISEASES: THE SYPHILITIC

ONE out of ten a victim of syphilis! This significant fact is becoming public knowledge through Surgeon General Parran's efforts to stamp out the disease. Reinforced by public-health officials, by members of social-hygiene associations, by doctors, social workers, and enlightened laymen, he is trying to make John Q. Public realize the effects of syphilis on the individual and on society. His approach is objective, based on medical knowledge, designed to supplant if possible society's normative attitude founded on moral prejudice. It is difficult to break through taboos which give the disease a social stigma, and show that its spread can be prevented, that treatment can produce effective results, that no shame should necessarily be associated with the disease. Lack of knowledge of the cause and of its effects on the organism, the whole aura of social ostracism with which the disease is now surrounded, have combined to make syphilis greatly dreaded. Some of the social and medical aspects of the disease and their deep-reaching effects on the physical and mental life of the victim and those about him appear with some vividness in the following stories.

### Steve and Edna Green

One of the posters designed by the United States Public Health Service for use in its campaign against syphilis showed a large ship crashing on rocks, bearing a legend warning against syphilis wrecking marriage. That the disease can do that is illustrated in the case of the Greens. At thirty-five, Steve Green is a victim of paralysis due to syphilis. He frequently suffers paretic seizures, despite the treatments which he takes regularly. His condition involves the central nervous system, cannot be checked, and

is growing progressively worse. It will be only a matter of time before actual "insanity" sets in to such an extent that he will have to be institutionalized. Moreover, Steve is aware of his condition. He knows his case is hopeless. He has difficulty getting about, cannot do much of anything, must depend on his wife for support, suffers physically, and withal has become increasingly irritable. Edna Green has a blood condition herself, presumably contracted from him, although not as advanced as her husband's. She has not been very faithful about taking treatments, for she is employed during the day and must do the housework at night. She is mentally and physically exhausted, an easy prey to the incessant quarreling which now marks their life together. Twin boys are so far free from any evidence of the disease, but represent a problem when they are not in school and have to be cared for and watched. Steve is incapable of looking after them. Financial pressure is felt, owing to the inadequacy of Mrs. Green's meager earnings as a stenographer to meet the needs of the family.

But the situation was not always thus for the Greens. Steve had been a handsome young mechanic, tall, well built, with a boyish smile and pleasant ways which won him many friends. Even now, when you see his tall stooped figure shuffle along leaning heavily on a cane, his face still handsome although marked with suffering, you can realize what he must have been. Occasionally, a sad smile passes over his face. Edna Green is still attractive, dark, well groomed, and presents a good appearance despite their financial difficulties, for she has a knack of fixing over old clothes. They were married very young and were very much in love with each other. As a matter of fact, they still are, but external conditions and the constant pressure of worry over money, over work, over health, have been too much for them.

The family is now known to a family-welfare agency which has been trying to help them with some of their difficulties. The record does not state how the disease was contracted. Steve knew he had it, but had understood he was cured. Whose fault that was, or whether it was wishful thinking on his part, due to its long latency, we cannot tell. Some seven or eight years ago, he broke out with a rash, and the doctor told him he had syphilis. He took treatments for a while, and the condition cleared up. He had one or two recurrences of the rash, but it always cleared up when he took treatments. He was then free for several years, until one day he had a paralytic stroke and was taken to the hospital. There, in no uncertain

terms, he was told of the seriousness of the disease. He became very faithful about taking treatments, urged the doctors to make them as strong as possible. It was a great effort for him to get to the clinic, for his leg and arm remained paralyzed after the first attack. But he did seem to get a little better with trying to use them, taking his "shots," and his wife rubbing his limbs regularly. But then, just when he was slightly encouraged, he began to have paretic seizures, for which he was hospitalized from time to time. Malarial treatment was under discussion, but the doctors felt Steve was too far gone for the treatment to do any good and doubted that he could stand it physically.

Steve had been a mechanic, and, although he had had periods of unemployment, the family had never been in want. He was a good worker and managed to get jobs. Since his stroke, he has not been able to work. The enforced idleness was difficult for him. He tried to do things around the house, to look after the youngsters while Edna worked, but finally that became too much for him as he never knew when he might be overcome by trembling. He tried to take long walks to exercise his limbs, and he spent much time in the public library reading. Mrs. Green had been fortunate in securing a stenographic position. With the help of relatives who took care of the children during his hospitalization, they had gotten along. Mrs. Green was aware of her infection during her pregnancy since the doctor at the health clinic had told her after the routine tests were taken. She did not have a serious condition, for the Wassermann test was only two plus, but she took the prescribed treatments, and the child was born healthy. She realized she should continue to take treatment, but it has been difficult, with her dual job of breadwinner and homemaker, to get to the clinic without taking time off her job, and she begrudged the money for carfare.

It was financial need that brought her to the social agency. Her earnings of barely $16 a week would not care for the family when she had to pay a woman to look after the little ones. But the social worker realized that more than economic anxieties were troubling Edna Green. She was primarily worried about her husband's condition. "Is there any chance for him?" she would ask the worker and the doctor frequently. She wanted him to have malarial treatment, anything to help him. She joyfully called the social worker if he showed the slightest improvement. She was also worried about her own condition and realized that she must keep up her

treatments, which were resumed now that the agency had been able to help the family. She was also concerned with making ends meet. Her boss was frequently irritable, but she must put up with it, she had so many dependent on her. Like so many others, she felt some humiliation about the cause of Steve's paralysis. As far as she was concerned, it didn't bother her that Steve had syphilis, nor that he had infected her, but neither his family nor her family must know. They would be "horrified," and she must keep the knowledge from them at all costs.

This is where the Greens are now, with Edna Green making a great struggle to keep the home together. Steve Green is deteriorating, fearing institutionalization, knowing there is but one end. The atmosphere for the children is one of strain. There are some bright aspects, as everyone is most co-operative. Both Steve and Edna are really trying to do their best. The doctors and nurses and the social worker are sympathetic because the family, particularly Mrs. Green, is making such efforts to function adequately. For the children and their mother, there is a future.

### Alice Schmidt

Alice Schmidt was almost fifteen years old when suddenly she "went blind." She was working at the time as a mother's helper, and her employer, quite worried, sent the girl immediately to the hospital. Almost with a glance, the physician diagnosed Alice's trouble as interstitial keratitis which is a late form of congenital syphilis. If he needed more information to substantiate his diagnosis, he found it in the notched, peg-shaped teeth of the girl, "Hutchinson's teeth," which are practically infallible signs of congenital syphilis. Naturally, clinical tests showed the presence of the disease. Immediate antisyphilitic treatment was initiated; meanwhile the social-service worker at the hospital investigated the social and medical history.

Alice's personal medical history drew a blank as far as could be ascertained. She had never had any trouble which had seemed serious enough for medical attention, at least that was the opinion of her great-aunt with whom she had lived since she was four years old. Nor had she evidently manifested any of the earlier signs of syphilis which would have brought her to the attention of teachers or nurses during her eight years of schooling. Her father, when located, was found to be syphilitic and to have been under treatment for some time. Alice's mother, dead some years, had a

hospital record of venereal disease which she presumably had contracted from her husband and had innocently enough passed on to Alice. Alice's sister, four years her junior, gave no indication of having syphilis.

Alice's social history showed deprivation of many pleasures and advantages which children so frequently have. It was not long after her brother's birth, when she was still a small child, that her mother died. Her mother's family, priding themselves on being moral and upright citizens and shunning the thought of knowing someone with a disease which to them existed only among the lowest classes, particularly prostitutes, turned against her father and the little children. They would not recognize that the Schmidt family was related to them. An aunt of Mr. Schmidt's took the family into her meager home. Alice's father was not around very much. He traveled about a good deal and held temporary jobs from time to time; he sent some money back for the support of the children, but did not come to see them for several years. Great-aunt Jennie in her way was a very well-meaning person and fond of the children. However, she was rather austere and placed many restrictions on the children. As they had always been healthy, she was never obliged to call in a doctor. In fact, she did not believe in medical skills. In her old-fashioned way, she did not believe in higher education for women, so when Alice finished grammar school, she and her father, who was then back in a neighboring town, felt that Alice should go to work. She was placed in a home to work for her board and room. This position proved very hard for the girl, and she found a new position for herself, which she held but a few weeks when blindness came upon her.

Alice was hospitalized and treated for a period of eight weeks when she was thought to be able to leave the hospital, though needing to continue treatments. Since her home was at a great distance from the hospital, and since she could not very well work at this time, she was placed in a foster home by a child-placing agency. Alice's illness had come upon her in the fall of the year. By the following summer, she was so much improved that she was interested in working again, and the doctors felt she was able to do so. She was also anxious to continue with her schooling. Through the efforts of the agency, she found a home where she could work for her room and board while attending school and continuing her biweekly visits to the clinic. Although she moved after a year to another home, the general plan proved satisfactory throughout her high-school course.

Except for English, schoolwork was not hard for Alice, but she did not

make friends easily and was particularly reticent as far as boys were concerned. The social worker felt her aloofness was due to self-consciousness about her disease. The girl was so sensitive about going to the venereal-disease clinic that she resorted to various expedients to prevent anyone knowing she attended. Once, when in the company of others, she met one of the social workers from the hospital, and felt sure that the recognition revealed her as a syphilitic person. For days, she brooded over the encounter. In spite of her emotional reactions, Alice did not blame her father or mother for her condition, but accepted it somewhat fatalistically in the same manner she had grown accustomed to her father's indifference to her. From time to time, even her father helped her in paying for her treatments, her foster home care, or such items as clothes and school supplies.

Alice's self-consciousness about her disease manifested itself also in concern about her teeth. Not appreciating the general lack of understanding on the part of the public at large, she felt that from their appearance everyone could tell she was "marked" and socially unacceptable. With the help of the social agency, she secured an estimate on having the teeth repaired, and cashed in a small insurance policy for this purpose. Although the process was painful, Alice was much happier when the work was completed, and she need no longer fear betrayal of her condition from that source. During her last two years of high school, she had been gaining a greater sense of security due to her success in school, the real place she had found in the home where she worked, and her less frequent trips to the clinic.

But Alice had another disappointment to face. She decided during the course of her last year at school that she would like to become a nurse. The doctors and nurses at the clinic and the social workers discouraged her from this because of the remote possibility of infecting others or possibly reinfecting herself. She talked with the heads of three hospital-training departments, and they were unanimous in deciding that she should not enter this branch of service. Alice found it very difficult to accept the decision that the door was definitely closed to her.

She was fortunate, however, shortly after her graduation, in securing a position in a department store, which position she held for a number of years. During her school days, while working at home and studying, Alice had not given a great deal of thought to boys. Now she desired to go out with them and did so, but was constantly tormented with the thought that

if she did fall in love and want to marry she should not because of her condition. She also felt that no man would want her when he knew she had been receiving medical care for syphilis. Despite her faithfulness to the treatments prescribed, Alice had never succeeded in getting a negative blood test. It seemed as though there were no justice, for she had been extremely conscientious about her condition, with apparently no reward. Both the social worker and the doctor tried to encourage the girl and reassure her of her ability to hold her place socially.

By this time, with Alice well established in a job and quite able to carry on her medical care, the agency had officially closed its case, although the social worker continued to see the girl occasionally. Some years later, Alice announced her engagement. She was extremely happy, for she had told her fiancé about her condition, and he was not at all alarmed. For some time, she had been discharged from medical care, except for periodic checking up. She was due for another examination at that time but was in quite a state about going back, fearful lest some recurrence of the disease would make her unfit to marry. After several weeks of indecision, she returned, found that this time all her tests were still negative. Alice said it was as though a great burden had been lifted from her.

What has happened to Alice, except that she is now married, we do not know, but we cannot fail to remember the years of struggle and heartache due to a physical condition for which she was in no way to blame.

Of all the physical conditions which we have considered so far, syphilis seems the most pernicious and the most pathetic. Three of the medical aspects which seem important to emphasize are, first, the devastating ravages of the disease on the organism; second, the long periods of time during which it is necessary to take treatment; and third, the possibility of being a victim of the disease but unaware of it. In the stories of the Greens and Alice Schmidt, also of Mr. Jason in the chapter on blindness, we have seen examples of the physical impairment imposed. Steve Green had received the death sentence. Mr. Jason had lost his sight. Alice Schmidt, although temporarily blind, was able to be cured and to get rid of other evidence of the disease in her peculiar teeth. Treatments continued for years for Alice Schmidt. Steve Green should have had

them earlier, and Edna Green would probably have to continue for some time. None of these persons realized they had the disease until some rather advanced symptom appeared, blindness in two instances, paralysis in the other. Only Edna Green was caught in a routine physical laboratory test which is a device whereby most cases may someday be detected. Presumably Steve Green slipped somehow in not realizing that he should have continued treatments. Financial problems usually are involved in treatment. With all these persons, free medical care was available, although some expense even in this connection was incurred by the patients.

But the most insidious factor about syphilis, as about gonorrhea, is the social attitude toward it. Because of the fact that most cases are contracted through sexual intercourse, the disease has borne, among those who regard themselves as respectable, a disrepute difficult to combat. The subject has been one which could scarcely be mentioned without a breach of good taste. Syphilis has been regarded as a disease of the prostitute and those who break the moral code. This self-righteous attitude has made the victims ashamed to seek treatment, humiliated to be seen at a clinic, as in the case of Alice Schmidt. Mr. Jason's son went through agonies when he escorted his blind father to the hospital. The holier-than-thou attitude toward the afflicted was maintained by Alice's relatives in ostracizing the family because of her father's defect. It was such an attitude, it will be recalled, which Mrs. Jason took toward her husband when his blindness made his condition apparent. Mrs. Jason could not refrain from reproaching her husband bitterly for his condition, pointing out if he had lived rightly, the affliction would never have come upon them. Mrs. Green was too devoted to her Steve to care about anything except that he was ill and would not recover, but she, too, reflected the current taboos, in not wanting her family or his to know the origin of his difficulties.

Although the current educational program is emphasizing the medical component of syphilis, which is certainly serious enough in

its own right, the syphilitics are still viewed with suspicion by their families and acquaintances. Many members of the community still believe that societal privileges are forfeited by these people and, at the same time, fear lest they become infected, paradoxical as this may seem, considering their assumptions about the mode of transmission. Alice Schmidt's constant fear that someone would discover her condition, despite her acceptance in a foster home, maintained a ghastly hold over the girl all through her adolescence, so that she was wary of making friends. Her constant trips to the clinic she felt necessary to explain. Thus, it was easier not to have friends. The Jasons felt they must move away from old friends and neighbors. For several years, they could not bear to look them up.

Depending on the stage of the disease, that is, whether or not the patient's condition is infectious, vocational opportunities are limited, but to a less degree than in physical conditions discussed in preceding chapters. Unless in a very advanced condition, where the central nervous system is involved, or other handicapping sequelae appear, as in the case of Steve Green, the person is still physically capable of performing his accustomed tasks, and, if being treated, is usually not in a state to infect others. If the condition is known, employment may be refused on moral grounds, but medically excluded occupations are few.

*Incidence of Syphilis.* Since 1919, syphilis has been a "reportable" disease, which means that every new case discovered by physicians, clinics, and hospitals should be reported to the local health authorities. To safeguard the confidence reposed in physicians, no names need be included. In spite of this, the gap between the number of actual cases of syphilis and the number reported is thought to be large. It is certain that statistics are incomplete. The Conference on Venereal Disease Control Work held in Washington, D.C., in December, 1936, estimated that the number of syphilis cases in the United States at that time was 683,000, or four per-

sons per 1,000 of the population.[1] The conference committee reporting felt that this estimate was far below the actual situation, for several reasons. Studies of the incidence of syphilis in certain areas have consistently revealed a higher proportion of syphilitics with late manifestations of the disease than of persons in the early stages. This must mean that at any one time there are many unsuspecting persons with early syphilis whose disease never gets recorded. Frequently the disease is not recognized because its symptoms are akin to other ailments, and a blood test is not given. For every case of syphilis, there is a potential exposure rate which would presumably account for more cases. In selected population groups given routine serologic tests, Wassermann or Kahn, rates have been higher than the four per 1,000 among regularly reported cases. The rates varied, according to the composition of different groups, from two to 200 per 1,000, averaging 100 per 1,000, the basis for the slogan "one person out of every ten." [2]

Syphilis has not shown a marked downward trend in incidence; in fact, the rates of reported cases have not varied a great deal since 1930. Probably there is some increase in number due to a more adequate reporting system. The campaign to stamp out the disease is hardly well enough under way to make much impression as yet on the figures, which are inadequate at best. Table 19 gives the annual number of cases reported to various departments of health. Again, we must remember that this does not tell the whole story. The United States Public Health Service believes "that the number of fresh infections with syphilis which come to medical attention annually, is twice the number of cases, in all stages, that are reported to health departments." [3] Because of the unsatisfac-

[1] Proceedings of Conference on Venereal Disease Control Work, "Prevalence, Incidence and Trend of Syphilis," *Venereal Disease Information* (1936), Supplement No. 3, p. 125.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 126–7.

[3] N. A. Nelson and Gladys L. Crain, *Syphilis, Gonorrhea, and the Public Health* (1938), p. 156. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

Table 19

CASES OF SYPHILIS REPORTED TO STATE DEPARTMENTS OF HEALTH, 1919–1936 [a]

| *Year* | *No. of Cases Reported* | *Rate per 1,000 Population* |
|---|---|---|
| 1919 | 100,205 | 1.13 |
| 1920 | 142,557 | 1.36 |
| 1921 | 216,942 | 2.04 |
| 1922 | 171,333 | 1.58 |
| 1923 | 172,539 | 1.57 |
| 1924 | 194,869 | 1.74 |
| 1925 | 203,162 | 1.80 |
| 1926 | 211,277 | 1.92 |
| 1927 | 196,630 | 1.69 |
| 1928 | 183,719 | 1.67 |
| 1929 | 194,101 | 1.73 |
| 1930 | 216,706 | 1.84 |
| 1931 | 229,552 | 1.98 |
| 1932 | 262,762 | 2.25 |
| 1933 | 235,093 | 1.89 |
| 1934 | 232,481 | 1.86 |
| 1935 | 254,551 | 2.03 |
| 1936 | 267,740 | — |

[a] Figures for 44 states, exclusive of Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming. *Proceedings of Conference on Venereal Disease Control Work* (1936), adapted from Table 4, Appendix D., p. 144.

tory figures, it is useless to compare the number of cases with those of other diseases.

Similarly, the number of deaths attributed to syphilis is probably lower than the real facts would reveal if we could get them. In 1936, the Bureau of the Census reported out of a total number of 1,479,228 deaths only 12,612 as due to syphilis, amounting to only 0.8 per cent of the total.[4] There are more deaths from syphilis

[4] *Mortality Statistics, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 12.

among babies under one year than in any subsequent five-year age group. Except for these early deaths, syphilis is not a great factor in mortality until the age group 50 to 54 years is reached. A study of deaths in Westchester County, New York, from July 1, 1931, through June 30, 1933, due to syphilis and alcoholism was made in such manner that a physician could report the true cause of death without revealing any names. Only 40 deaths had been originally ascribed to syphilis, and the recheck on a confidential basis disclosed 79.[5] If these figures are representative, we would be justified in doubling the number of reported deaths. In addition to the numbers willfully withheld, many deaths may occur in which syphilis is a contributing cause but is not recorded on the death certificate.

As with other ailments, syphilis victims seem not to be distributed evenly throughout the United States or among the age groups, sexes, and races. Information is, of course, incomplete, most of it coming from studies of selected population groups, inmates of prisons, the army and navy, coast guard, some entire communities, employees in industry, patients of clinics. The most complete investigation was carried out in a series of one-day censuses of the presence of venereal diseases in different localities in the United States. All told, data were collected from 39,000 medical agencies, serving some 29,000,000 people in 49 communities of varying sizes.[6] The incidence according to sex and race was found to bear out what is commonly believed. More men than women had syphilis, in the ratio of three to two. Out of 124,366 cases reported, 76,075 were male and 48,291 were female, ratios per 1,000 of the population of 5.2 and 3.4.[7] Although general agreement appar-

[5] Matthias Nicoll, Jr., and M. T. Bellows, "Effect of a Confidential Inquiry on the Recorded Mortality from Syphilis and Alcoholism," *American Journal of Public Health*, 24 (1934), 816.

[6] Lida J. Usilton, "Trend of Syphilis and Gonorrhea in the United States Based on Treated Cases," *Venereal Disease Information*, 16 (1935), 149.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 152.

ently exists among those investigating the racial factor that there is a greater prevalence of the disease among colored than white persons, the exact ratio has not been determined. In the one-day-census material collected by the United States Public Health Service, the rate per 1,000 population was 16.8 for the colored persons involved, and 5.7 for the white.[8] This makes the ratio of colored to white approximately three to one.

The Venereal Disease Control Conference quoted the incidence of syphilis based on known cases among Negroes as twice that for whites, a ratio of 12.6 per 1,000 to 5.9 for the white population.[9] Routine Wassermann tests given to 33,000 Negroes in Southern states indicated the amazing rate of 205 per 1,000 Negroes.[10]

Possibly the data on age distribution are of a more reliable nature since presumably the ages of a sample would be about the same as of the total number of patients. Distribution of deaths from syphilis according to age has shown a high loss in the early years and the next highest between the ages 50 to 54. The incidence of syphilis shows large numbers afflicted at earlier ages than the latter period and, of course, a significant proportion in infancy. Some of these comparisons are shown in Table 20 following. A study of the age at the time of syphilis infection of 6,669 clinic patients showed the greatest number of infected between the ages of 21 and 25.[11] A previous study of 5,110 clinic patients in New York showed a similar high point in the age group 20 to 24.[12] Figures from some Massachusetts studies separate early syphilis from the total. The former shows a peak among males between the years 25 to 29, and for females in the years 20 to 24. For all forms, in Massachusetts, the peak for males was not reached until

[8] Usilton, in *Venereal Disease Information*, 16 (1935), 184.

[9] Proceedings of Conference on Venereal Disease Control, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 127.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 143.

[12] Jacob A. Goldberg, "Occupations and Venereal Disease," *Hospital Social Service*, 20 (1929), 127.

Table 20

AGES OF SYPHILITICS

| Ages | Deaths from Syphilis 1935 [a] | Age Distribution of Clinic Cases by Time of Infection [d] | | Age at Admission to Hospital, Rate per 1,000 of Population [e] | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | No. | Per cent | Male | Female | Total |
| Five years and under | 1,662 [b] | 23 | 0.3 | 2.2 | 1.2 | 1.7 |
| 6–10 | 56 | | | | | |
| 11–15 | 58 | 205 | 3.1 | .5 | 1.4 | 1.1 |
| 16–20 | 182 | 1,596 | 23.9 | 7.9 | 8.3 | 8.7 |
| 21–25 | 388 | 2,020 | 30.3 | 17.1 | 7.8 | 12.3 |
| 26–30 | 566 | 1,360 | 20.4 | 16.0 | 4.3 | 9.7 |
| 31–35 | 700 | 718 | 10.8 | 10.8 | 2.3 | 6.1 |
| 36–40 | 1,007 | 388 | 5.8 | 4.4 | 1.1 | 2.6 |
| 41–45 | 1,119 | 181 | 2.7 | | | |
| 46–50 | 1,263 | 103 | 1.5 | 1.8 | .4 | 1.0 |
| 51–55 | 1,303 | 38 | 0.6 | | | |
| 56–60 | 1,088 | 22 | 0.3 | .7 | .2 | .4 |
| 61–65 | 898 | 10 | 0.1 | | | |
| 66 and over | 1,283 | 5 | 0.1 | .2 | .1 | .2 |
| Total | 11,590 [c] | 6,669 | 100.0 | — | — | — |

[a] *Mortality Statistics* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1935]), pp. 206–07. Age intervals originally given under 5, 5–9, 10–14, etc. They were changed here to compare with other figures, which probably involves a slight error.

[b] Of these, 1,508 died the first year.

[c] The ages of 17 persons were unknown.

[d] Proceedings of Conference on Venereal Disease Control, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

[e] Usilton, "Trend of Syphilis and Gonorrhea in the United States," 1935, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

the years 50 to 54, and for females during the years 35 to 39.[13] Conclusions from these various reports are that syphilis, both early and late, is most prevalent during the ages of 20 and 30, but that deaths are most frequent among infants and older persons.

Distribution also varies throughout the United States. Prevalence of syphilis in cities of 100,000 population or more is lower than in smaller cities.[14] The United States Public Health Service

[13] Nelson and Crain, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

[14] Usilton, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

also reports "consistently over a number of years higher rates for Southern than for Northern states, largely due to the higher incidence of syphilis in the Negro. . . . Incidence rates increase from Mountain States, to West North Central, to East North Central, as 1, 2, 3." [15] Naturally, centers with treatment facilities draw patients from surrounding territories. In Massachusetts, investigators found that rates of reported syphilis decreased in direct proportion to the distance from free treatment centers.[16] The implications of all these studies are that the problem becomes localized, as it were, in cities, in the South, among Negroes, and among the young, thus indicating the direction for the work of those interested in combating and controlling the disease.

*Family Relationships of the Syphilitics.* The two stories presented in this chapter, and the previous account of the Jasons, indicated certain areas of adjustment necessitated by the presence of syphilis in one or both partners in a marriage. Generations of looking askance at the disease have made the taboo even more powerful among families than in the outside world. Persons unwed are fearful of marrying. Persons married are afraid of passing on their infection to the next generation. Physicians at clinics tell of great emotional upheaval in patients when a diagnosis of syphilis is made. "How can I tell my wife?" (or husband) is frequently asked. The stumbling block is usually due to the damning suspicions with which the patient is viewed. Even if the disease is innocently contracted—and these cases are in the minority—it is difficult to convince others of innocence. Even if accepted by the family, one may fear to involve them in neighborhood ostracism.

Some data are available as to the proportions of syphilitic men

[15] Proceedings of the Conference on Venereal Disease Control, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

[16] Nels A. Nelson and H. M. De Wolfe, "The Migration for Treatment of Patients with Gonorrhea or Syphilis," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 98 (1932), 794–9.

Table 21

SYPHILIS ACCORDING TO SEX AND MARITAL STATUS IN MASSACHUSETTS, 1930 TO 1936. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION [a]

| | MALE | | FEMALE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Marital Status* | *Early Syphilis* | *Primary Syphilis* [b] | *Early Syphilis* | *Primary Syphilis* |
| Single | 54.9 | 59.8 | 35.3 | 43.3 |
| Married | 33.3 | 28.7 | 42.6 | 38.7 |
| Widowed, Separated, and Divorced | 7.4 | 6.6 | 17.6 | 12.9 |
| Not Stated | 4.4 | 4.9 | 4.5 | 5.1 |
| Total { Per cent | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total { Number | 5,462 | 2,474 | 3,639 | 674 |

[a] N. A. Nelson and Gladys L. Crain, *Syphilis, Gonorrhea, and the Public Health* (1938), p. 182. Data used by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[b] Primary syphilis is the disease in its first stage usually involving a lesion that appears between 10 and 40 days after infection.

and women who are married and single. Table 21 shows data from the records of the Massachusetts Public Health Department for the years 1930 to 1936. These figures would seem to indicate that many men enter marriage infected and pass on the disease to their wives, inasmuch as a larger proportion of single men than single women are infected with early syphilis and more married women than married men are reported. Again, the larger number of women than men in the group of separated or divorced may mean further that wives break with their spouses upon discovering the infection. Goldberg, in his study of 5,110 clinic cases in New York, found a similar distribution, that is, a larger number of married women and a larger number of single men. Similarly, more of the

women were divorced or widowed, but his numbers in the latter group are too small to be significant.[17]

The outstanding medical implication in the presence of syphilis in families is, of course, that all members should have serologic tests, and, if any evidence of infection is present, treatment should be arranged. Almost invariably a syphilitic spouse will infect the mate. If the wife is syphilitic, she is likely to pass on the disease to her child. If the condition is not detected, miscarriage or stillbirth may result. Or perhaps the child is brought into the world to endure lifelong disability—crippled, blind, or with some other congenital condition for which he is in no way to blame. Thus it is that doctors and clinics are more and more taking routine precautions in the treatment of pregnant women, so that if there is evidence of syphilis, they may have treatment for themselves and the child.

Problems of interpretation of the disease to a child, whether the parents or the child himself be infected, present untold difficulties, particularly if the parent's own ideas and feelings are mixed and blocked. We saw in the Jason family the children taking over the mother's horror and humiliation. The Green children did not know the cause of their father's ailment. Syphilitic children are subject to the same unwholesome attitudes on the part of parents as are displayed with other diseases, usually overprotection or resentment. These attitudes may be exaggerated if the parents realize that they are to blame for the child's condition. Unfortunately, we are still at a point where our knowledge of adjustments made is limited to individual cases. We lack the cumulative data on which generalizations might be based. What we do know is that tension is produced by the presence of syphilis within a family, usually out of all proportion to the medical aspects, but definitely affecting the readiness of those affected to seek medical aid.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* We know that syphilis is

[17] Goldberg, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

not a respecter of persons, that those in high estate and holding positions of importance in a community may become its victims. Some of the powerful latent effects are thought to emerge as frequently among the dissolute scions of the wealthy as among the reprobates who are poor. Because of the secrecy with which the disease is surrounded, no means are yet at hand of examining the spread of the disease according to economic status. Those about whom we have most information are patients reporting to public or semipublic clinics. The patrons of the private physician still represent unknown quantities. We can quickly assemble what we know on the economic aspects.

Certain areas in any city or state will stand out as high in venereal-disease rates. This is usually because the figures from which the data are plotted are taken from public records of the economically disadvantaged; our figures are thus biased. Nevertheless, it is important to know that syphilis does flourish in blighted areas. A study in New York of records of the State Health Department showed that over 50 per cent of the cases of syphilis were concentrated in well-defined areas which also furnished a high proportion of tuberculosis, mental disease, and crime. These areas, says the writer, are "city slums with the unsavory environment of more or less broken, squalid dwellings, and congested living conditions." [18]

Only one study seems to have gone into the occupations of the syphilitic, the study of Goldberg's. His patients were all clinic patients from a low economic level. He found, however, that 25 per cent of the 3,847 males were laborers, seven per cent were restaurant workers, another seven per cent chauffeurs, and the rest represented a number of occupations. Of the 1,263 women, 62 per cent were housewives and unemployed, six per cent were factory work-

[18] Albert Pfeiffer, "Social Service Problems Among Venereal Disease Cases," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, 21 (1935), 157.

ers, and the remainder distributed among a number of trades, mostly domestics, waitresses, laundry workers.[19]

Occupationally, syphilis has not created a great problem. Although in many industries physical examinations have been made of employees or required before employment, this did not necessarily include a blood test for syphilis. When the blood test has been given, the employer may act quickly to dismiss those with positive findings, without relation to medical implications. A patient with open lesions should be isolated until the lesions have healed. But this is not a long-drawn-out process, and thereafter the patient may return to his work or school or play as the case may be. Congenital syphilis is not communicable after the first few years, so it does not present a menace either. "Late syphilis," according to Dr. Nelson of the Massachusetts Public Health Department, "is so rarely communicable, other than through sexual contacts or pregnancy, that the dismissal from employment of those who have had syphilis for many years is usually senseless and unjust." [20] Proper understanding of the epidemiology of the disease should give industry a different attitude. Only two phases of syphilis are occupationally limiting: the open-lesion stage when there is danger of contagion, but which is usually soon overcome; and complications affecting other parts of the body than the genital organs, which accompany syphilis if it goes on unchecked.

The early stages of the disease may insidiously sneak up on the victim, coming and going without his knowledge. A further block to discovery is a complacent notion entertained among many that they could never have such a disease. At any rate, the first two stages, if passed through unnoticed, will not usually result in any immediately serious impairment. The damage is being done, however, and the end results come later, placing a person in the last stages of the disease directly in an incapacitated class, incapacitated

[19] Goldberg, *op. cit.*, p. 131–2.

[20] Nelson and Crain, *op. cit.*, p. 84. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

because of specific organs affected. He may have a cardiovascular infection, requiring immobility. He may experience loss of hearing or sight, disabilities which have been discussed in Chapter 5. He may have paralysis, putting him among the crippled and disabled. Again—and this happens with regrettable frequency—the mental faculties may become impaired, in which case the patient not only is unable to take care of himself, but must be looked after by others, either family or state. Finally, death may take its toll, in which event, if the victim be a wage earner, as is often the case, the source of support for his family is removed, thrusting the burden on kinsmen, on the state, or on private charity. Those interested in actuarial statistics have estimated that deaths from syphilis in its later stages rob persons annually of thousands of years of life, and hence of vast potential earnings.

*Attitudes toward the Syphilitics.* Our contention here is that more serious than the medical complications mentioned is the opprobrium with which a syphilitic is regarded. Such personal stigma is as handicapping as the disease itself. In Chapter 18, we shall show how community attitudes can so categorize a person even in good health that he is handicapped vocationally and prevented from participating socially with his fellows on equal terms. Syphilis is a case in point. Physicians and social workers have been struggling for some time to modify conventional ideas and attitudes toward the disease. They know that ignorance, fear, and shame deter many patients from seeking or accepting the treatment needed. They know also that the same beliefs and feelings cause other people to avoid or abuse the victims of this disease.

A study was recently made of the information about syphilis and attitudes toward it displayed by a homogeneous group of 200 men.[21] Answers to a carefully worded questionnaire showed varying degrees of familiarity with the subject. Naturally, attitudes

[21] Maurice Wortman, "A Limited Survey of Public Opinion on Syphilis" (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1939).

varied correspondingly. The mean score on the information part of the questionnaire showed some significant differences, which are reproduced in Table 22. Younger men seemed to have more knowl-

Table 22

COMPARISONS OF AVERAGE SCORES ON AN INFORMATION TEST REGARDING SYPHILIS—200 POSTAL EMPLOYEES IN ST. LOUIS, 1938 [a]

| *Groups* | *Average Score Received* | *Per Cent of Total Number* |
|---|---|---|
| Average for all | 467 | 100 |
| *Age Differences* | | |
| 20–29 years | 499 | 23 |
| 30–39 | 504 | 36 |
| 40–49 | 454 | 25 |
| 50–59 | 407 | 13 |
| over 60 | 334 | 3 |
| *Racial Difference* | | |
| White | 496 | 86 |
| Colored | 472 | 14 |
| *Marital Status* | | |
| Married | 488 | 82 |
| Unmarried | 452 | 19 |
| *Occupational Classification* | | |
| Laborers | 427 | 9 |
| Substitutes | 486 | 21 |
| Special Clerks | 423 | 14 |
| Regular Clerks | 475 | 56 |

[a] Maurice Wortman, "A Limited Survey of Public Opinion on Syphilis" (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1939).

edge than the older ones, regular clerks did better than laborers, white men had higher scores than the colored, and married men surpassed the single.

Feeling against syphilitics was high, as measured by a rough social-distance scale, but was directed more against the infectious individual than the noninfectious. Ninety-three per cent of the group claimed they would not consider marriage with an infectious syphilitic and 72 per cent would not consider marriage in any case. Eighty-eight per cent would not invite a known syphilitic person to their home if infectious, but only 59 per cent would refuse to do this if he were noninfectious. Other contacts toward which less opposition was shown were making the acquaintance of a syphilitic, continuing to go with a friend who was diagnosed as syphilitic, attending a party where a person who was syphilitic was present. Sixty-four per cent felt they could not work with a syphilitic, if he were infectious, but only 12 per cent seemed to have any scruples if he were noninfectious.[22]

The author of this study also presented some typical situations to the men to see what their attitude was towards a prostitute with syphilis, a young man infected by a prostitute, and a child infected with congenital syphilis. Feeling ran high against the prostitute, for whom the advisability of enforced treatment was stressed. Sympathy toward the young man was exhibited to some degree, but many felt he should be made to feel the penalty of his misstep. Toward the child, most liberal feelings were encountered, although some said they would not wish their own children to play with such a one. The group, as a whole, stressed the need of treatment for all and felt that doctors and nurses should try to educate infected individuals to this end. They preferred appealing to intelligence rather than requiring treatment by force.[23] Many felt all cases known should be reported. Most of those responding to the questionnaire felt hesitant about talking with other persons about the disease, but stated they could talk to doctors. Strangely enough, despite this admission, 39 per cent claimed they received

[22] Wortman, "A Limited Survey of Public Opinion on Syphilis," pp. 56–7.
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 63 and 64.

their knowledge of the disease from ordinary conversation.

This study is, of course, limited, but it is suggestive. It shows that there is still considerable ignorance about the disease and that the educational program has not yet made much impression. Direct questions as to who was interested in pushing the campaign brought forth some odd remarks, giving the American Medical Association more credit than the United States Public Health Service. It showed, too, that there was still a punishing attitude toward the syphilitic person, and a feeling of distaste toward him, especially evident in the case of an infectious person.

*Programs of Treatment.* Some individuals have been courageously attacking this situation and the ostrichlike attitude of the complacent public for some time. With the appointment of Dr. Thomas Parran as Surgeon General, the movement to control the spread of syphilis and to inform the public of its nature has been pushed vigorously with the hearty co-operation of various social-hygiene associations and state departments of health. The appropriation of $15,000,000 for the three years ending June 30, 1941, has furthered the efforts to have an effective program of control in this country. This sum is to be dispensed through the United States Public Health Service for the aid of state and local departments of health. Through the Federal child-welfare program, it is expected that the problem of infant mortality will be attacked. Along with these developments, an educational program has brought a wider knowledge of the ways in which the disease is spread. Pamphlets, newspaper articles, radio talks have all had their part in spreading knowledge of the disease, ways of prevention, need for treatment, and places where treatment may be had. At least one attempt has been made to dramatize the ravages of the venereal diseases through a motion picture, entitled *Damaged Lives.*

A public-health program already existing in some states, and believed to be adequate for securing aid under the Social Security

Act and the Venereal Disease Control Act, includes six major activities:

1. *Diagnostic Service.* Every state should provide accessible facilities for examination, taking of tests, and making diagnoses. Consultation through these centers is also advised. These centers should have adequate laboratory facilities.

2. *Case Finding and Case Holding.* It has been urged consistently that more active part be taken by clinics, as well as by private physicians, in discovering cases of venereal disease. If one case is diagnosed, the chances are that other persons intimate with the sick individual have contracted the disease. Then, too, the source of infection is often difficult to locate, for those diagnosed are reticent on this point. The high incidence of cases within family groups demonstrates the necessity of such measures. Particular efforts to detect cases of syphilis in pregnant women, by requiring routine blood tests in all prenatal service, should be a factor in reducing congenital cases. More activity is urged in following up those cases which have once been identified. The loss of patients attending clinics has been marked. Some drop out when they begin to feel better; others do not see the need of continued treatment or are unwilling to follow through such a long period; still others have recourse to the drugstore clerk.

3. *Securing or Providing Treatment.* In addition to the provision of diagnostic centers, and more care in discovering and "keeping" cases in need of medical attention, the actual provision of treatment for those afflicted is a third part of such a program. Many municipal and free clinics are already in existence under varying auspices. Increase and improvement of these facilities is a requisite to adequate public-health care.

4. *Information Service.* The dissemination of information regarding the disease and methods of treatment is an essential part of a complete program for the control of syphilis. An informed public would increase co-operation with all medical efforts.

5. *Reporting and Collection of Other Data.* From an administrative angle, more complete case reporting is urged, although this is an area in which opinion is divided. The question raised is whether or not a person suspected of having syphilis should be reported to authorities for possible diagnosis and prescription of treatment. Most do agree that greater efforts may be promoted along the line of urging persons to report themselves, even if safeguarded confidential reports by physicians are not acceptable. Collection of additional data of social and medical interest regarding the disease and disposition of cases should throw more light on the whole problem.

6. *Research and Demonstration Activities.* There has been much research in methods of treatment, but there is need of more, especially regarding the effectiveness of various programs of control. A further step is the demonstration of treatment and preventive measures and their results.

In addition to this comprehensive medical program, other means of promoting a healthier family and social life have been instituted. Twenty-three states have passed laws requiring blood tests prior to marriage. Some of these require it from both partners, but others require only the male to file a medical certificate. That such measures do not have general social approval is seen by the numbers who go to near-by states where the tests are not required to get married.

Finally, there is need of more studies like Wortman's to determine the social status of persons known to be afflicted with syphilis. Impressionistically, we know that they are unwelcome members of many social groups, but we have no accurate or extensive information about the degree of their ostracism. Particularly is it desirable to learn whether their social participation (of each specific kind) is greater or less than that indicated to be medically safe.

## Suggested Readings

Ingraham, Louis B., and Stokes, John H., "The Philosophy of Case Holding," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, 18 (1937), 127–31. Deals with many social aspects of syphilis, why patients do not continue treatment, and the social worker's task in educating them.

Nelson, Nels A., and Crain, Gladys L., *Syphilis, Gonorrhea, and the Public Health*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. Excellent comprehensive account of medical aspects of the disease, incidence and prevalence, programs of control.

Parran, Thomas, "The Next Great Plague to Go," *Survey Graphic*, 25 (1936), 405–11. Popularly written account of extent of problem, and ways and means of controlling it.

Proceedings of Conference on Venereal Disease Control Work, *Venereal Disease Information*, Supplement No. 3, 1936 (U. S. Public Health Service). Contains addresses on prevention and control of venereal disease, and progress made; also contains statistical data on prevalence and trends.

Snow, William F., "Social Hygiene," *Social Work Year Book, 1937*, pp. 465–9. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Edwards, Mary S., "Social Hygiene," *Social Work Year Book, 1939*, pp. 418–22. General statement of whole problem, emphasis on control and educational program.

Stokes, John H., "The Public, the Doctor and the Syphilis Problem," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, 21 (1935), 313–29. Good article on educating the public to the problem of syphilis, showing part doctor should play. Gives concrete suggestions on an educational campaign.

Usilton, Lida J., "Trend of Syphilis and Gonorrhea in the United States. Based on Treated Cases," *Venereal Disease Information*, 16 (1935), 147–64. Most thorough study of prevalence of venereal diseases in the United States.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Give to the class or to a representative sample of the student body the Wortman questionnaire on information and attitudes pertaining to syphilis. (Sample may be secured from the Department of Social Work, Washington University, St. Louis.) Score, tabulate, and compare with

Wortman's findings (Table 22 in this text). Note especially differences in the scores of men and women, of freshmen and seniors.

2. From the local and state health departments and the United States Public Health Service, secure available data concerning syphilis and gonorrhea. Abstract data relevant to social participation and present to the class.

3. Arrange a conference with a medical social worker or physician to discuss social aspects of syphilis and gonorrhea. Note particularly difficulties involved in discovering patients, inducing them to accept and continue treatment, attitudes toward these diseases, activities of quacks, family relationships of patients, occupations from which certain types of patients may be excluded.

4. Look through the files of some newspaper or weekly magazine for the current year and one ten years past. Note the frequency with which mention is made of syphilis, gonorrhea, venereal, "social" disease, social hygiene. Classify the articles, editorials, and other items as: informational, sensational, hortatory.

5. If there is a local organization (social-hygiene society, venereal-disease clinic) devoted especially to combating venereal diseases, secure a report, arrange an interview, or attend a public meeting.

6. Consult the *Journal of Social Hygiene* and the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* for current articles regarding syphilis and gonorrhea. Summarize difficulties of the doctors and clinics in persuading patients to continue treatment, attitudes toward disease which affect the individual's social relationships, programs for control.

7. Examine publicity and interpretive program of the United States Public Health Service and any local program to see what points are stressed and how the public is appealed to in the fight against venereal disease.

# *Chapter 10*

# MENTAL DISORDERS: THE PSYCHOPATHIC AND THE "INSANE"

SOCIETY'S attitude toward the problems of mental well- or ill-being has changed with the passing of years. No longer are those with mental diseases regarded as possessed of demons, as witches, untreatable wretches doomed to spend their lives chained in some filthy prison. Nor is the prevailing concept one of a group of "insane" individuals who are set apart from "normal" people by gross evidence of impaired mentality. Now it is recognized that the gamut of mental health is broad, and the degrees of adjustment range from well-balanced personalities through varying stages of peculiarity to marked symptoms of mental abnormality. Increasing attention is given to signs of maladjustment growing out of some problem within the individual or from his impact with certain environmental and cultural conditions which prevent his complete and satisfying functioning within his social setting.

So varied are deviations that we can but indicate the direction some peculiarities have taken. Even slight differences from customary and expected actions cause comments and sometimes suspicions from friends and kinsmen. This may enforce a self-inflicted isolation on the person. When behavior becomes of a menacing sort, steps may be taken to confine the perpetrator in an institution. There, with understanding of such illness which has grown up, some restoration may occur. Some of these problems are illustrated in the following stories.

**Ruth Berger**

Ruth Berger had a most unhappy childhood. Until her tenth year, she lived with her father, mother, and sister Alma, two years older. Although both parents came from self-respecting families, they were not happy with each other, and her father was continually finding fault with her mother, cruelly beating her as well as the children. Nor did her father support the family adequately. He had a steady job with a construction company, but he did not bring his wages home. He was generally disagreeable and ill-liked. His own family would have nothing to do with him, felt he was "not even worth shooting." For several years prior to her death, Mrs. Berger was moody and sullen, owing, relatives and friends felt, to her abuse by her husband. Later, she became violent, was sent to a public hospital for observation, and there she died.

The two girls went to live with a maternal aunt, who could not keep them very long because of her husband's small income and her own growing family. So they were referred to a children's agency and placed in foster homes. Their father made no effort to support them nor did he come to see them. Ruth presented some behavior difficulties at an early age, becoming moody and sullen and spending much time brooding. This occurred very shortly after placement in the foster home. Gradually, she appeared to take a renewed interest in life, became gay, applied herself at school where she did very well. After completing the eighth grade, she decided to continue to high school and found a home where she could work for her room and board and continue with her education. The domestic duties palled after the first year, and she left school to take a factory position which she held for six years. She and her sister Alma, who was also working, lived together. They seemed to take a great deal of pleasure in each other's company. Ruth had always been the stronger and the leader. She did much better schoolwork, was more efficient in the factory, was more outgoing in her social relationships, had many friends. She was also exceedingly attractive, had numerous boy friends, went out to dances and parties frequently. At twenty-one, she became engaged. She and Jim seemed devoted to each other and were planning marriage within a relatively short time. Ruth diverted her earnings to purchasing linen and household goods for her hope chest.

Meantime Alma suddenly married the young man with whom she had been keeping company. Ruth seemed to resent bitterly that her sister was

married before she was. About this time, she was bruised in an auto accident and claimed to have hurt her head, although physical findings did not substantiate her complaint. At this time, too, she quarreled with her fiancé, and they separated. The separation upset Ruth a great deal. After this series of events, Ruth suffered what her friends called a nervous breakdown. Her work became inefficient, and she quit her job, seemed to go to pieces. She complained of further sharp pains in her head, became moody and silent, but would sometimes laugh unexpectedly. She acted "peculiar," was not herself. She stayed with relatives for a while, but was so odd and disagreeable around the house that they asked her to leave. Ruth then went to stay with a friend, where she behaved in a similar manner. She would not help with any housework and stayed in bed most of the time, seemingly listless, but occasionally bursting into angry fits, when she would break dishes and become almost unmanageable. Previously, she had been very meticulous about her personal appearance, but now she became careless and untidy. Her friends did not wish her to return to them. Alma was pregnant and felt she could not care for Ruth, so Ruth was forced to apply for public aid and was placed in a convalescent home.

The social worker and the matron at the Lodge attempted to interest Ruth in doing something, in going out instead of sitting in her room all day. A "made-work" job, helping around the institution, was provided at which Ruth did very well for five or six months. With her small earnings, she bought some clothes for herself, was stimulated to make her own dresses since she sewed very nicely. Her sister and aunt came to see her frequently, and all felt she was making some progress and apparently was interested in the life about her. But gradually, she began to exhibit again outbursts of erratic behavior. She began by refusing to co-operate, using vile language. Then she displayed very aggressive behavior, throwing about glasses, books, whatever was at hand when she became angry.

Since such actively antisocial behavior could not be tolerated when others in the community were endangered, her relatives finally committed her to a local sanitarium. Here she will probably remain, for her prognosis is not very favorable. It was not without great conflict that Ruth was finally taken to the sanitarium; her sister went through a great deal of agony before taking the step. Misguided neighbors who did not know the situation took it upon themselves to condemn Alma for thinking of "putting her sister away," and told her unpleasant but unfounded tales about the treatment of patients at the institution. But when nothing could

be done with Ruth, the step was agreed upon. Alma was further worried because she hated to admit Ruth was mentally ill. Her mother had died of "insanity," her father was always thought peculiar, Ruth was sent to a sanitarium, and Alma was fearful lest she herself manifest symptoms of mental disorder. Her suffering was acute. After Ruth's final acceptance by the institution and a talk with the doctor, Alma appeared more at ease and less worried.

### Mrs. Mabel Nichols

Of Mrs. Nichols' childhood, we know little except that she came from a hard-working, middle-class family. She had a paucity of formal education, claiming that she did not like school, and left to help her mother because she was needed at home where there were a number of other children. Her intelligence displayed in filling out application blanks and carrying out directions would make one suspect that some mental incapacity might have been involved, but it is difficult to say. At any rate, she seems to have had an uneventful youth, keeping close to her family group. She was pleasant, good-natured, and cheerful. At the same time, she seemed quiet and passive.

Mrs. Nichols married when in her early twenties. She and her husband seemed happy and well mated. Sooner than was expected, the child came. Mr. Nichols felt his wife did not have proper medical attention, for he had been unable to reach a doctor until after the child had come. Shortly after the birth, Mrs. Nichols developed a high fever, followed by sudden and violent mania. She accused the nurse and others of trying to poison her and the baby. In fact, she became so violent that she had to be kept in a strait jacket. For a period of three years, she was transferred from one institution to another, but showed no symptom of recovery. Her family felt her prognosis was poor. They reported she was mentally confused, disoriented as to time, place, and person. She talked incessantly when they went to see her, rambled a great deal, sometimes was foulmouthed in her speech, and was frequently silly. Occasionally, she was destructive.

We do not know any details of her treatment, but in the fourth year of her isolation, she became more tractable, was still nervous and talkative, but not seriously troublesome. As this behavior continued and her relatives were pressing for her release, she was finally discharged "on parole for good behavior." Happily she rejoined her husband and child. All went

well, and the second child was born with no unfortunate results. Shortly after the birth of the second child, Mr. Nichols died. Mrs. Nichols and the children then went to live with her family. After some time, she asked help from a social agency, for her brother stated he could no longer support three extra persons.

Mrs. Nichols' family felt that she was more than a financial burden. They complained that she was careless in her appearance, did not seem to comprehend what was said to her, was very vague about many matters, and was not able to care properly for the children. She had held a routine factory job for a while, where a great deal was not expected of her. Her supervisor claimed she performed her tasks in an unsatisfactory manner unless she was closely supervised. Yet under surveillance she was a good worker. The social worker found Mrs. Nichols at first unable to make plans for herself and her children. She seemed very dependent on others and at a loss since her family did not want her. She claimed that her relatives nagged at her and made her nervous. Through the efforts of her family and the agency, she and her children were established in furnished rooms. As she gave the youngest rather inadequate care and did not seem to grasp elementary principles of child feeding, arrangements were made with the good-natured landlady to care for the child. Mrs. Nichols obtained some work by the day, cleaning and washing. This program worked out satisfactorily. Mrs. Nichols liked working, and earned a small income to go toward the expenses of her family. She was assisted in getting a grant from the state program for dependent children, and this with her earnings provided a living.

The family group was a happy one. Mrs. Nichols kept the home in good order and the two little girls neat and clean. Her oldest child was going to school and apparently getting along with teachers and schoolmates. Mrs. Nichols was lax in discipline and overindulged the children, but she was kindly and well meaning. With some supervision, but not too much domination, she could get along. She showed no signs of her previous illnesses.

Both Ruth Berger and Mrs. Nichols were diagnosed as having a specific mental ailment. Yet it is not always possible to return a definite opinion about a person exhibiting behavior which is not in accord with his previous conduct and is in direct contrast to what individuals in similar circumstances usually do. In Ruth Berger's

case, it was some time before her behavior was pronounced enough to call forth positive action, removing her from society. Mrs. Nichols' attack was acute, but her recovery presented some of the same difficulties of decision as to when she was sufficiently oriented to be able to live outside the protected environment of an institution. Thus, instead of thinking specifically of persons as mentally deranged, we—and here we are representing a current tendency—speak in terms of their mental health, an inclusive term, more or less generally defined as "the internal organization of the personality, and its adjustment to its environment." [1] In particular, we are interested in the ways in which mental health influences the participation of an individual in the social groups of which he is involuntarily or voluntarily a member. The failure of proper mental functioning, perhaps more than any other single factor, is bound to have direct and far-reaching effects on the ability of an individual to share in normal social activities. In fact, our whole concept of mental disorder has reference to the failure of persons to adapt or adjust themselves harmoniously to their environment. This failure, in whatever form it manifests itself—whether withdrawal, compensation, or active hostility—constitutes overt evidence of abnormality.

Some of the characteristics which indicate peculiarity are withdrawal within oneself and a detachment from reality. Ruth Berger, for example, instead of showing her usual vivacity and love of company would not go out, stayed in her room, lay in bed all day. Mrs. Nichols on her release kept to herself somewhat, but also made irrelevant and silly remarks reflecting poor judgment or no judgment at all. Neither of these two women appreciated the economic aspect of her situation. They could not seem to hold jobs and were apparently not concerned about this, but accepted readily what community and family would do for them. Definitely some mental incapacity was interfering with their ability to function. But

[1] "Mental Hygiene," *Social Work Year Book, 1939*, p. 250.

these particular persons were not isolated from their accustomed form of social life by institutionalization until signs of danger to other people were apparent. According to the record, Mrs. Nichols became very violent, attacked nurses and others, obsessed with the idea that she and her child were to be poisoned. Ruth Berger threw objects about, but when she began to run after inmates of the home with a butcher knife, the patience of a sympathetic household reached the breaking point.

Perhaps one of the most far-reaching developments of the twentieth century is the mental-hygiene movement, with its insistence that those folk who seem to labor under marked mental disorders of varying severity are persons to be helped rather than to be segregated without treatment. Planned programs within and without institutions, plus the services of psychiatrists, are available to aid the sufferers in overcoming their anxieties. Mrs. Nichols responded to the treatment given her and was able to return to the community without further danger to anyone and evidently with some profit to her family. Ruth Berger seemed to respond for a while to the efforts of social worker and psychiatrist to interest her in something besides her worries, but the effort did not bear fruit. Although her chances for recovery seem poor, we do not know the extent to which she may still be helped.

Mrs. Nichols had difficulty in returning to an unrestricted environment such as her family home. It happens frequently that although erratic behavior ceases within well-regulated and supervised surroundings, the situation becomes more complex when there is no guidance and no restraint. Particularly perplexing may be the problem of self-support, if there is no home nucleus to which the patient may go. Again, a person who has been in an institution for mental patients may feel stigmatized because of the attitudes of associates, such as are discussed in Chapter 18. The brothers and sisters of Mrs. Nichols seemed to expect that she would do silly and annoying things because she was "not quite right." She

was not wholly acceptable to the neighbors because of her mental inadequacies which caused some complaints and were factors in the desire of relatives to make other plans for her.

*Nature and Incidence of Mental Diseases.* With the flexible concept of mental health indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the problem of estimating numbers in various categories of mental disorder is impossible. Persons acutely ill are found in institutions for the mentally unstable, although such institutions, both public and private, cannot account for all those in need of such care. Persons less severely handicapped remain with their own families or in other private homes. A number of these patients doubtless receive treatment from psychiatrists in private practice or have received attention at some of the outpatient clinics. Obviously we cannot get an accurate accounting of these private patients scattered about unless some well-planned census be attempted, and even then, as with syphilitic patients, doctors might have professional scruples about reporting cases. In addition to this difficulty, there are presumably many persons with some manifestations of mental illness which have never been diagnosed. In order to arrive at some notion of the numbers of persons mentally disordered, we begin with patients showing the most exaggerated symptoms, necessitating segregation from society. Our statistics are collected from reports of public and private institutions on the number and character of their population and the new admissions.

There are two general ways of estimating the prevalence of mental diseases. One measurement is that of "first admissions," which indicates the extent of the problem each year in terms of new patients received at the reporting institutions. The other method depicts the total burden as of a given date. In 1936, the United States Bureau of the Census reported 484,252 patients on the books of 467 institutions which reported to it.[2] Eighty-five per cent of the

[2] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Diseases, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 3. The institutions included 174 state hospitals, 2 Federal hospitals,

patients reported were in state hospitals, and only 2.4 per cent in private hospitals. This shows conclusively that the bulk of mental patients are cared for by the states. Of the patients, 432,131 were actually residents of the institutions, and 52,121 were under supervision of the institution but on parole or "otherwise absent," the latter category including those on visits or who had escaped. The first admissions in 1936 for all of these hospitals included 105,994 patients, with readmission of some 30,500.[3]

During the last twelve years, statistics of patients in state mental hospitals have been gathered annually. Hospital inmates have increased since 1926 from a rate of 217 to 283 per 100,000 of the population. The number of patients paroled has also been augmented, in keeping with the tendency to try patients in the community under supervision before they are completely discharged. Actually the number of parolees is insignificant and represents only about 11 of each 100,000 of the population. (See Table 23.)

The number of first admissions also has grown during the twelve-year period. Part of this may be attributed to the increase in facilities for the care of such persons, which puts more of them in a position to be counted. It is hard to say which is more frequently true: that larger numbers of patients require increased bed capacity, or that greater hospital facilities invite more patients. In either event, the upward trend is the basis for forecasting future developments. From an analysis of first admissions to mental hospitals in Massachusetts, New York, and Illinois, it was estimated that, at the rate of increase now apparent, 110,000 to 120,000 of the 2,144,800 infants born during 1936 would eventually be committed to a hospital for mental diseases.[4] Continued increase in admissions to mental hospitals is to be expected inasmuch as the span of life ex-

25 veterans' administration hospitals, 67 county and city institutions, and 199 private hospitals.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[4] Harold F. Dorn, "The Incidence and Future Expectancy of Mental Disease," *Public Health Reports*, 53 (1938), 2004.

Table 23

PATIENTS IN STATE HOSPITALS FOR MENTAL DISEASES, 1926–1937 [a]

| YEAR | TOTAL NO. IN HOSPITAL | | | ON PAROLE OR OTHERWISE ABSENT | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *On Books* | *Number* | *No. per 100,000 of Estimated Population* | *Number* | *Per Cent* |
| 1926 | 272,716 | 246,486 | 217.2 | 26,230 | 9.6 |
| 1927 | 284,650 | 256,858 | 218.9 | 27,792 | 9.8 |
| 1928 | 294,062 | 264,511 | 222.2 | 29,551 | 10.0 |
| 1929 | 302,538 | 272,252 | 225.6 | 30,286 | 10.0 |
| 1930 | 312,088 | 280,252 | 228.8 | 31,836 | 10.2 |
| 1931 | 324,214 | 292,284 | 236.3 | 31,930 | 9.8 |
| 1932 | 340,037 | 305,031 | 244.8 | 35,006 | 10.3 |
| 1933 | 359,105 | 321,824 | 256.7 | 37,281 | 10.4 |
| 1934 | 373,607 | 332,094 | 263.1 | 41,513 | 11.1 |
| 1935 | 384,675 | 342,167 | 269.1 | 42,508 | 11.1 |
| 1936 | 398,006 | 353,604 | 276.2 | 44,402 | 11.2 |
| 1937 | 411,432 | 364,403 | 282.8 | 47,029 | 11.4 |

[a] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Diseases, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 10. Figures as of the beginning of the year.

pectancy has been lengthened, with a corresponding proportion of mental troubles accompanying advanced years. With this rise will inevitably come demands for more facilities and larger funds to support these patients. The increase in persons hospitalized, as subsequent analysis will reveal, will be presumably among the older, the city dwellers, the uneducated, the economically disadvantaged, the unmarried.

Mental diseases, although complex in origin and symptomatology, admit of classification such as has been generally adopted by the American Psychiatric Association.[5] Since this classification is rather intricate, we have inserted a brief summary which will present the major categories of the more common psychoses. It

[5] William A. White, *Outlines of Psychiatry* (1935), pp. 35–7.

must be recognized that there is some oversimplification here as several categories may be subject to further subdivision.

Medically, three general diagnostic categories of mental disease are recognized: the organic psychoses, the functional psychoses, and the psychoneuroses. The principal organic psychoses are senile dementia, cerebral arteriosclerosis, general paresis, and the alcoholic psychoses. In these disorders there exists a known physical or organic basis. The principal functional psychoses are dementia praecox, manic-depressive psychosis, involutional melancholia, and paranoia. To date, no demonstrable organic pathology has been shown in these psychoses, so that hereditary and constitutional factors are considered to be of chief etiological importance. The etiological factors in the psychoneuroses and in the psychoses allied with psychopathic personality are usually said to be psychogenic.[6]

In Table 24, we have presented a classification of patients admitted to State Hospitals in 1936, according to diagnoses. Of the psychotic categories, it is quite apparent that the five largest are respectively: dementia praecox, cerebral arteriosclerosis, manic-depressive psychoses, senile dementia, and general paresis. In all of these classifications except the manic-depressive, males outnumber females, the proportion being most marked among the general paretics and next in the arteriosclerotics. As we found in Chapter 9 that more men than woman had syphilis, it is natural to expect paresis, one of the end results of the disease, to be more severe on the male population. The general ratio of male to female patients is 11 men for every 8 women. In the category of involutional melancholia, as well as that of the manic-depressive, the rate for women is appreciably higher than that for men. The authors whom we quoted above attribute this sex differential "in part to the greater home care extended to women patients and in part to the greater resistance which women show to all forms of disease."[7]

[6] Carney Landis and James D. Page, *Modern Society and Mental Disease* (1938), p. 11. By permission of Farrar and Rinehart.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 42. By permission of Farrar and Rinehart.

Table 24

FIRST ADMISSIONS TO STATE HOSPITALS, BY PSYCHOSIS AND SEX, 1936 [a]

| PSYCHOSIS | TOTAL | | MALE | | FEMALE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* |
| Total | 76,309 | 100.0 | 44,221 | 99.9 | 32,088 | 100.0 |
| Dementia praecox (schizophrenia) | 15,370 | 20.1 | 8,304 | 18.8 | 7,066 | 22.0 |
| Cerebral arteriosclerosis | 9,557 | 12.5 | 5,628 | 12.7 | 3,929 | 12.2 |
| Manic depressive | 9,068 | 11.9 | 3,852 | 8.7 | 5,216 | 16.3 |
| Senile | 6,564 | 8.6 | 3,451 | 7.8 | 3,113 | 9.7 |
| General paresis | 6,143 | 8.1 | 4,605 | 10.4 | 1,538 | 4.8 |
| Alcoholic | 3,516 | 4.6 | 2,952 | 6.7 | 564 | 1.8 |
| Involutional psychoses | 2,121 | 2.8 | 531 | 1.2 | 1,590 | 5.0 |
| Psychoneuroses | 2,040 | 2.7 | 797 | 1.8 | 1,243 | 3.9 |
| All other psychoses | 8,776 | 11.4 | 4,923 | 11.1 | 3,853 | 11.9 |
| With mental deficiency | 2,728 | 3.6 | 1,477 | 3.3 | 1,251 | 3.9 |
| Undiagnosed and unknown | 2,374 | 3.1 | 1,458 | 3.3 | 916 | 2.9 |
| Without psychosis | 8,052 | 10.6 | 6,243 | 14.1 | 1,809 | 5.6 |

[a] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Diseases, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 15.

A natural inference from the higher incidence of senile dementia and cerebral arteriosclerosis is that age is a factor in mental disease. This accords with the facts presented in Chapter 4. Table 25 offers more detailed evidence. The age of the patient varies to some extent with the nature of the psychosis. Dementia praecox is apt to claim its victims from young adults. Almost half of the first admissions to hospitals in 1936 with a diagnosis of dementia praecox were between twenty and thirty years of age. If the upper limit is raised from thirty to thirty-five, well over half of the total number of dementia-praecox patients are included. The diagnosis of general paresis is found to be significant beginning at the thirty-year age

Table 25

AGE AND SEX OF FIRST ADMISSIONS TO STATE HOSPITALS, 1936 [a]

| *Age* | *Total* | *Male* | *Female* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 76,309 | 44,221 | 32,088 |
| Under 15 years | 575 | 300 | 275 |
| 15–19 | 3,318 | 1,913 | 1,405 |
| 20–24 | 5,909 | 3,519 | 2,390 |
| 25–29 | 7,376 | 4,238 | 3,138 |
| 30–34 | 7,369 | 4,281 | 3,088 |
| 35–39 | 8,097 | 4,595 | 3,502 |
| 40–44 | 6,975 | 3,904 | 3,071 |
| 45–49 | 6,813 | 3,754 | 3,059 |
| 50–54 | 6,069 | 3,471 | 2,598 |
| 55–59 | 5,211 | 3,119 | 2,092 |
| 60–64 | 4,288 | 2,630 | 1,658 |
| 65–69 | 4,150 | 2,551 | 1,599 |
| 70 years and over | 9,223 | 5,310 | 3,913 |
| Age unknown | 936 | 636 | 300 |

[a] *Patients in State Hospitals for Mental Diseases, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), pp. 22–3.

level and extending to about sixty. The other diagnoses of first admissions tend to cluster in the upper age brackets.[8]

Stuart Chase, with his descriptions of "Megalopolis," and other writers discussing urbanism and our machine civilization have charged factory and city with damage to the nervous systems of even hardened city dwellers. We are thus curious to see whether or not the metropolitan centers contribute more new admissions to mental hospitals than do the more peaceful rural areas. The findings of the 1933 census of mental patients in state hospitals, where a distinction between urban and rural was made, return an affirmative answer. The rate per 100,000 population is almost twice as

[8] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), pp. 22–3.

Table 26

RESIDENCE PRIOR TO FIRST ADMISSION TO STATE HOSPITALS, 1933 [a]

| *Residence* | *Total* | *Male* | *Female* | *Ratio per 100,000 Population* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 69,368 | 41,029 | 28,339 | 56.5 |
| Urban | 47,108 | 27,158 | 19,950 | 68.3 |
| Rural | 18,622 | 11,568 | 7,054 | 34.6 |

[a] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease, 1933* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1935]), p. 46.

great in urban communities as in rural areas. But the United States Bureau of the Census follows a somewhat arbitrary definition of what constitutes a "rural area." Communities of under 2,500 are so designated, and all over that are considered urban. Landis and Page, who have made a comprehensive investigation of the characteristics of mental patients, were interested in attempting to distinguish further between grades of urbanization. They examined, therefore, data for New York State where distinctions were made as to size of cities. This analysis showed 42 per cent more patients hospitalized in cities with a population of from 2,500 to 10,000 than in communities with a smaller population. Beyond that point, the increase in number of cases rose far less sharply with the size of the city. "This means," concluded the authors, "that the differences usually noted between urban and rural rates are not due primarily to differences in rates between farming communities and large metropolitan cities, but to differences between communities of less than 2,500 and those over 2,500." [9]

The cities, however, bear another relationship to patients in mental hospitals. Examination of residence prior to admission of new patients to state and private mental hospitals from Chicago from

[9] Landis and Page, *op. cit.*, p. 50. By permission of Farrar and Rinehart.

1922 to 1934 showed that "high insanity rates appear to cluster in the deteriorated regions in and surrounding the center of the city." [10] When the investigators broke down the total rates according to different types of insanity, they found striking contrasts. The schizophrenic disorders, also called dementia praecox, were found chiefly in the disorganized parts of the city near the center, in rooming-house areas of low economic level and with other ecological conditions indicating cultural liabilities. In contrast, manic-depressive psychoses were apparently scattered at random throughout the city and did not show an area of concentration as did the dementia-praecox patterns.[11] The high rates for general paresis, as might be anticipated considering the nature of the disease, were found in rooming-house areas, especially the so-called hobohemias. A much lower incidence was apparent in areas of home ownership.[12] The organic psychoses of old age were found throughout the city, with some slight concentration in central slum and Negro communities.[13] Similar findings for Providence, Rhode Island, give some basis for the tentative hypothesis that schizophrenic disorders, in themselves functional, have some relationship to the nature of the social life within the different parts of a city. If further investigation substantiates these findings, it may mean that environment is a precipitating factor in mental illness of a dementia-praecox type or, on the other hand, merely that people so afflicted tend to withdraw from family and kinship groups and seek a more impersonal mode of existence such as may be found in rooming-house areas.

We have not yet examined the general rates of the Negro and white population. The total number of white persons first admitted to state hospitals in 1933 was 61,222, whereas the total

[10] R. E. L. Faris and H. Warren Dunham, *Mental Disorders in Urban Areas* (1939), p. 35. By permission of The University of Chicago Press.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 132–3.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

number of Negroes admitted was 7,349. The rate for the Negroes is 61.8 per 100,000 population as against the white rate of 56.2.[14] A further interesting fact brought out by the census is that if the white population is divided into the native and foreign born, the foreign-born rate considerably exceeds that for Negroes.[15] The Bureau of the Census suggests as a partial explanation of the higher rate for Negroes that these figures may not cover large numbers of white persons in private hospitals, which cater practically not at all to Negroes who with few exceptions must accept state care. The Bureau also comments on the fact that the foreign born may be affected by strains in the process of adjustment to new physical, social, and economic environments.

*Family Relationships of Mental Patients.* Even minor nervous ailments often make a person difficult to get along with; usually the more serious the symptoms, the more serious the personality problems presented. Family relationships may thus become involved with the presence of one or more members in a neurotic or psychotic state. The damaging effects on the functioning of the family as a unit depend upon the member affected, his role in the family group, and the ability of the remaining members to accept or work with this member. Myerson, in his research regarding family relationships, concludes that domestic problems become more acute if the mental health of the mother or children is affected.[16] More women in the home than men are apt to be subject to mild forms of neuroses. Inasmuch as they may not get out as much as the fathers, their anxieties are apt to press more heavily upon them and thus upon the children, who are also in the home more than out of it. Traditionally the mother plays an important part in the household. Besides her duties as homemaker, she spends much

[14] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease, 1933* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 26.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[16] Abraham Myerson, "Mental Hygiene and Family Life," *Social Aspects of Mental Hygiene* (1925), pp. 63–74.

time with the children, is their confidante in their childish troubles, disciplines and trains them, is expected to share the burdens of the father, and to manage, as a rule, on a small income. Change in her ability to fill this role may easily become a factor in family disintegration. But the latter may not be so serious, if the children can make allowances for the mother, or if the father is able to carry on some of the mother's duties. A student investigating the problems of young married couples known to a family agency found that nervousness and mental incapacity did not necessarily prove disorganizing, if the mate not affected was emotionally stable, able and willing to meet the somewhat exacting needs of the other.[17]

As with previously discussed handicaps, institutionalization breaks up a family group, whatever member is removed. In the special case of dementia-praecox patients coming from areas of disintegration in a city, we might expect that the family had already been broken prior to the institutionalization. In general, we might

Table 27

MARITAL STATUS OF FIRST ADMISSIONS TO STATE HOSPITALS, 1933 [a]

| MARITAL STATUS | MENTAL PATIENTS *Number* | | MENTAL PATIENTS *Per Cent* | | GENERAL POPULATION *Per Cent* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Male* | *Female* | *Male* | *Female* | *Male* | *Female* |
| Married | 18,378 | 14,165 | 44.8 | 50.0 | 60.0 | 61.1 |
| Widowed | 4,161 | 5,304 | 10.1 | 18.7 | 4.6 | 11.1 |
| Single | 15,984 | 7,301 | 39.0 | 25.8 | 34.1 | 26.4 |
| Divorced | 1,837 | 1,302 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 1.1 | 1.3 |
| Unknown | 669 | 267 | 1.6 | 0.9 | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Total | 41,029 | 28,339 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

[a] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease, 1933* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 36.

anticipate finding few married persons among inmates of mental hospitals. Table 27 compares the number and percentages of persons first admitted to state hospitals in 1933, according to marital

[17] Louise Marble, "A Study of 82 Young Families Known to the Milwaukee Family Society" (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1939).

status, with the percentages in the corresponding categories of the general population. Except for single women, the divergence between the mental patients and the general population is quite marked. Disproportionately large numbers of widowed and divorced persons of both sexes and of single men are found among mental patients. There are several possible interpretations of these facts. First of all, the breakup of a marriage may precipitate a mental disorder. Second, a measure of mental deviation may contribute to the breakup of a marriage by divorce or desertion. Third, failure to marry may either result from mental deviation or may contribute to it. Landis and Page hold that there is a biological factor involved in all this.

> Biological factors encourage marriage of the fittest so that the unstable and more maladjusted individuals either remain single, become divorced following marriage, or do not remarry after they have been widowed or divorced. As a consequence of this selection the single, divorced, and widowed groups contain more potential and actual psychopathic material, both hospitalized and nonhospitalized.[18]

The institutionalization of a member is a very difficult step for most families. We recall the reluctance with which Alma Berger brought herself to commit her sister. The first evidence of queerness is commonly regarded by those nearest the afflicted as something unusual, but is passed over. Some plausible cause can usually be offered in explanation. As time passes and the person gives repeated evidences of peculiar behavior, fixed ideas, delusions of one sort or another, the problem becomes one with which they must reckon. On the one side are a sense of humiliation and unwillingness to remove a kinsman from the household, and, on the other side, family and community needs for protection and the patient's need for treatment.

The problem of psychotic and mentally disordered children in a

[18] Landis and Page, *op. cit.*, p. 74. By permission of Farrar and Rinehart.

home taxes the understanding of the parents and siblings. The influence of heredity on mental diseases is not clear, but so much emphasis has been placed on this that sometimes families feel responsible, suspecting some defect in their own constitution if their child develops symptoms of a mental disease. They may feel they must sacrifice all for their child. If other children in the home are without the manifestations, they often suffer acutely when a brother or sister is mentally unbalanced, especially if accompanied by any marked mannerisms like those of chorea and epilepsy. Other children are apt to be intolerant and to mimic a child or adult mentally incompetent, thus making his life unbearable. Such ridicule may cause even a well-balanced child humiliation, because his family is thus singled out for derision by his playmates.

Institutionalization of a person in a mental hospital frequently involves legal problems, especially where the patient is legally declared mentally incompetent. This may not create difficulties for patients who have no income or property, but complications may ensue where financial resources are involved. Our laws differ regarding the degree of competency which an individual must possess to manage his own affairs.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* What relation, if any, economic status bears to the incidence of mental disease cannot be stated with any precision, but available figures show considerable preponderance of the lower economic classes among the inmates of mental hospitals. Presumably these figures do not picture the situation accurately, inasmuch as most of them are from state hospitals where many patients not able to pay for other care are found. However, the small number of persons in private hospitals from which statistics are gathered would indicate that their inclusion would not greatly modify deductions from the other findings. The proportion of persons taken care of in their own homes or in boarding homes is unknown. In the 1933 census of mental patients, an attempt was made to classify all the new admissions by three large

economic groupings. Only ten per cent were found to be in comfortable financial circumstances. These data represent the problems of mental disease certainly as highly associated with economic insecurity and presumably related to problems of dependency and disease. (See Table 28.)

Table 28

ECONOMIC AND MARITAL STATUS OF FIRST ADMISSIONS TO STATE HOSPITALS FOR MENTAL DISEASES, 1933,[a] IN PER CENT

| ECONOMIC STATUS | MARITAL STATUS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Male* | *Total* | *Single* | *Married* | *Widowed* | *Divorced* |
| Dependent | 30.6 | 35.6 | 24.7 | 36.5 | 27.1 |
| Marginal | 59.4 | 56.8 | 62.9 | 54.4 | 63.7 |
| Comfortable | 10.0 | 7.6 | 12.4 | 9.1 | 9.1 |
| *Female* | | | | | |
| Dependent | 29.8 | 33.5 | 25.5 | 34.6 | 33.5 |
| Marginal | 59.1 | 56.8 | 62.1 | 55.3 | 57.5 |
| Comfortable | 11.1 | 9.7 | 12.4 | 10.1 | 9.0 |

[a] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease, 1933* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 55. Note that the categories employed in this table are very crude, also that comparable data are not available for the general population. It is suggested that the distribution of mental patients on various economic levels corresponds more or less with that of the general population.

Is the mental disorder more frequently a cause or a result of the economic status? We are not attempting to answer this question here, but it is one frequently debated. Landis and Page offer some evidence that it is more apt to be the cause, for mental capacity is a factor in securing and holding jobs. From some studies of the "hereditary" influence, they say tentatively, "mentally sound in-

dividuals tend to rise in the socio-economic world while the mentally unsound decline." [19]

An economic differential does exist, however, among different types of mental disease. Examination of diagnoses of patients in public and private institutions in relation to their economic status shows that, while all diagnoses are found in persons of high and low financial standing and educational background, some distinctions are evident. For example, alcoholic psychoses and general paresis are found much more frequently among persons leading a marginal existence with not much of an educational background. In other words, although there are many exceptions, certain mental diseases are prone to occur among the educated and well to do, while others are more common among the less advantaged. Landis and Page suggest the following order of the diseases, ranging from those most common among the poorer folk to those more prevalent among persons with education and money: [20]

1. Senile dementia
2. Cerebral arteriosclerosis
3. General paresis
4. Alcoholic insanity
5. Dementia praecox
6. Manic-depressive
7. Involutional melancholia
8. Psychopathic personality
9. Paranoia
10. Psychoneurosis

The same authors say further in regard to this list that paranoia and psychoneurosis form the "aristocracy" of mental diseases, for more college and high-school students suffer from these afflictions, and the highest percentage of those in comfortable economic circumstances are found in these two groups.

[19] Landis and Page, *op. cit.*, p. 59. By permission of Farrar and Rinehart.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 68. See also studies quoted by the authors which support this view.

So much for patients admitted to institutions. What about them when they leave? Each year, large numbers of patients are discharged, some of whom seem recovered and some of whom have improved sufficiently that the doctors feel they may again compete with others in the community. A limited number is discharged because the families seek a return of the patient, against the doctor's advice. Such persons are not likely to be self-supporting. During 1936, the numbers in these categories were as shown in Table 29.

Table 29

CONDITION AT DISCHARGE FROM STATE HOSPITALS, 1936 [a]

| *Condition at Discharge* | *Number of Patients* | |
|---|---|---|
| With psychoses | | 39,570 |
| Recovered | 13,212 | |
| Improved | 21,177 | |
| Unimproved | 4,358 | |
| Condition not reported | 823 | |
| Without psychoses | | 8,850 |
| Total | | 48,420 |

[a] *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Diseases, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 35.

As we have intimated before, it is not easy for these discharged patients, even in their improved conditions, to make adjustments to a life from which they have been excluded for some time, and in which they had not been comfortable previously. They are usually self-conscious and ill at ease. Other persons expect them to be peculiar. Employers are reluctant to give them jobs. Moreover, there is some relation to the time spent in a hospital and the ability to re-enter our competitive society; roughly, the longer time in the

hospital the less likelihood of readjustment.[21] The large number of readmissions is evidence, too, of failure to achieve social approval, for, in the last analysis, it is the tolerance of other people which permits some mentally ill to remain in the community and forces others to be institutionalized. In a follow-up study of 1,000 patients ten years after discharge from New York State Mental Hospitals, R. G. Fuller found that 42 per cent had never returned to the institutions, but had been able to continue as members of the community. Twenty-three per cent had died; 21 per cent had been returned to a mental hospital and were still there. The remaining 13 per cent had had one or more readmissions to hospitals but were at large in the community at the time of investigation. Criteria of a successful adjustment are uncertain, yet we must attempt some sort of judgment. Usually negative standards are used, such as no trouble with the law, no dependence on the state. Further than this, we have not gone as yet. Taking all things into consideration, Fuller believed that of those in the community, 68 per cent had made successful social and economic adjustments, and the remainder had made fair adjustments. The failures naturally are those who were sent back to the mental hospitals. Slightly more of those with manic-depressive psychoses remained in the community than did those with other psychoses.[22]

We still do not know exactly in what pursuits such persons have found employment or how much they have been helped by previous education and training. Occupational retraining is not ordinarily undertaken for mental patients unless some specific organic involvement, as paralysis, has impaired the use of limbs. Nevertheless, age of the individual, previous training, home situation, and nature of psychosis or neurosis greatly influence the

[21] Landis and Page, *op. cit.*, pp. 132–3.

[22] R. G. Fuller, "What Happens to Mental Patients after Discharge from Hospital," *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 9 (1935), 95–104.

choice of a job. So difficult is it for many patients to make adjustments in industry, home, and community that aftercare departments have been established in many hospitals. Social workers and doctors supervise the patients in making the transition from protected life to a free life.

All in all, it appears that persons suffering from mental disorders are also greatly handicapped economically. However, we have as yet no means of determining the precise relationship between these two obstacles to social participation. As pointed out before, economic insecurity undoubtedly contributes to emotional insecurity. But, on the other hand, mental disturbances tend in various ways to disqualify persons for various kinds of work. The more serious disorders are bars to all gainful employment. The same personality changes that interfere with vocational life threaten or destroy participation in other social activities.

*Friends, Interests, Attitudes of Psychotics.* For everyone, there is constant interplay between personality and environment, between attitudes and social relations. Our ideas, feelings, and actions seem largely to determine our roles and status in social groups; and yet our associates and all the experiences that come to us affect our ideas, feelings, and actions. All of us have some peculiarities which may have an organic basis or may arise gradually from our reactions to people and things about us, or from some acute crisis in our lives, as the death of a loved one, the shock of war, or some other shattering experience. Even the more severe psychoses are defined in relation to the social milieu of the patients. As White says, it is "the *social level* that essentially characterizes the psychoses." [23]

Roughly speaking, we may recognize three degrees of social interaction on the part of persons afflicted with psychoses. The first is complete withdrawal, in which the patient is wholly out of touch with the world around him; he has little to do with it, and it has little to do with him. This is a relatively harmless state directly

[23] William A. White, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

affecting no one but the patient. Usually he is not institutionalized, but works out a lone role in the community in which he finds himself. The second degree is characterized by behavior which makes one a veritable nuisance to others. This is due to his distance from the world of reality and his living in a substitute world of his own. Such a person may require considerable care, custodial or other, and may represent a prolonged cost to the state, but does not otherwise constitute a threat to society individually or collectively. The third degree, however, includes types dangerously deranged, whose presence in the community is a definite menace, who have so worked out their problems or delusional schemes that they require the elimination of other persons or threaten specific bodily harm. These patients must be apprehended, but many of them have such periods of rationality that it is often difficult to recognize their potential danger to the community.

Within these three groups are various overlapping types of mental disorder, ranging from obviously queer tendencies to more serious disturbances. At the bottom of the scale probably are those "lonely" individuals who withdraw completely, trying to make some kind of comfortable substitution for the group to which they wish to belong.[24] But no one suddenly becomes a recluse, shut in and uncommunicative. Such self-isolation often begins in childhood or adolescence. In extreme cases, the affected person will sit all day immobile, speaking to no one, refusing to eat or care for other bodily needs. Evidences of such personalities are common in the awkward, overgrown girl who pretends to prefer reading to attending parties, and the boy who studies valiantly trying to compensate by excellent scholarship for his lack of favor with others. Many of these wistful individuals are definitely aided in their social isolation by thoughtless parents who seek to protect them from everything, or who wish to keep them as companions. Child-

[24] This distinction between "lonely" and "queer" persons follows somewhat the presentation of Karl Menninger in *The Human Mind* (1935), pp. 19–156.

guidance clinics deal with many unhappy children. The case for many of these persons is far from hopeless, but parents and teachers have important roles to play in preventing the development of such tendencies. From the withdrawn child may come the despondent adult, the cases of intense melancholia, and possibly the eventual removing of oneself from the world. All of us at times fail to fit in with some group, have our moments of feeling inferior, and make our own little adjustments and compensations, but usually this is not a prolonged and deep-seated state.

The "queer" people who prefer to be alone are very familiar, from the old man who always carries his umbrella when he walks out, to Napoleon Bonaparte or Samuel Coleridge. Menninger places in this group a host of well-known names—Woodrow Wilson, Erasmus, Whistler, Rousseau, Wagner, George III, and others. Also many scientists, judges, surgeons are in this group of people, all of whom have demonstrated their limited ability to get along with others. They are seclusive, reserved, quiet, moody, sensitive, possibly nervous, and all prefer their own company, to work out their own plans and desires, rather than the company of others. There may be some of them who carry their dissociation from the world to such an extent they become ruthless and heartless as Loeb and Leopold, and Edward Hickman, but although the latter are still of this general "queer" type, their reaction pattern is such as to place them among those dangerous to society. In general, the queer are only misfits, those who cannot get along with others with any degree of mutual satisfaction. Their interests are not shared, their thoughts are ingrown, their work is impersonal, they travel alone.

But, of course, some of the lonely and queer may reach a stage where their aloofness, their inability to reconcile themselves with their environment, causes them to build up whole delusional systems, new ideas of their own importance, and restless excited states, so that they must talk in a nervous, rambling manner to anyone. Some hear voices, receive messages which they must execute,

become completely disordered. Others grow old and become disorientated. Here is a woman who has long since left her childhood home, incessantly packing to go back, who must constantly be watched lest she get on the train or attempt to do so. There is one who becomes untidy in dress and appearance, says things which she does not mean and does not understand. All of these eventually become nuisances to someone. They are obviously out of touch with the life around them. They need attention and physical care. They may be harmless, but have things on their minds, are excitable, or possibly the reverse, to such an extent that other persons are decidely annoyed or bothered by them. They are pests. Their type is usually dementia praecox of the simple or catatonic type where undue lassitude or rigidity of posture for long periods of time is characteristic; or senile dementia that requires much bodily care; or manic-depressive psychoses with their periods of excitability and depression; or melancholia. Many persons are in asylums, happy under the pretense of being God, the king, or that favorite butt of comedians, Napoleon. Some of these patients may have had delusions of such a type that they take revenge on others, but these would probably be included in the next classification based on societal relations.

The third level of personality derangement embraces those who are not only unable to get along with others, or who have become nuisances to themselves and others, but who constitute menaces to society. The public was stunned by the Leopold-and-Loeb case, that two lads so young and well favored should commit so brutal a crime. All too frequently the papers carry items of some poisoning, or callous slaying, the perpetrator of which, in most instances, must have been insane. And yet it is hard to recognize and admit the early signs. In the story at the beginning of this chapter, although all recognized that Ruth was very queer, those closest to her hated to take the step that would remove her from home and community.

The protection of society from these dangerous persons has been frequently stressed. But not all mental cases are of this desperate type. Many err against society in lesser ways, such as petty thieving, forgery, and other minor offenses. The question of the relation of crime to mental illness and mental defect has been perennially discussed. Certain facts are known. A substantial proportion of criminals or offenders against our laws are, shall we say, "normal deviates." Dr. Glueck, in a report on the inmates of Sing Sing made in 1917, showed that 59 per cent of the prisoners admitted during the two-year period which he was studying might be classified as departures from the normal, in psychiatric terms.[25] Subsequent studies brought out somewhat similar facts and certainly pointed to the conclusion that crime is not a factor of and by itself susceptible to cure by administration of certain fixed punishments, but is related to the total personality and circumstances of the perpetrator of criminal acts. The work along this line, while not confirming any such sweeping deductions as that the majority of criminals are mentally afflicted, does emphasize the relation of the individual's life organization to the delinquent act.

On the whole, studies of the social participation of the mentally disordered belong to the future. The most fruitful point at which to begin seems to lie in the rather large body of case material. Stories of the life-history type furnish many clues and much insight into the problems encountered before and after onset of mental disease, including the transition state. This material, of course, affords us merely an impression of the general tendencies of patients during the time covered by their stories, and the particular habits and attitudes of the persons whose story is told. We do not know what has been omitted, and we lack quantitative data. It is difficult to visualize comparative studies of persons with mental disorders and those not so afflicted, because of the difficulty of dis-

[25] Frankwood E. Williams, "Finding a Way in Mental Hygiene," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 149 (1930), Part III, p. 3.

tinguishing them from each other. Comparisons of groups living in institutions with those outside might possibly be made, but what they would reveal regarding participation would depend both on personal characteristics and on opportunities available. An indirect way of getting at this question might be to compare the personality traits of persons who are very active socially with those who take little part in group life. Subjects for such study could be found in student bodies or elsewhere. The findings might point to a significant difference between the social participation of those who are well, and those who are poorly, adjusted mentally. Until some such study has been made, we are dependent upon impressions arrived at more or less empirically. They are that psychopathic personalities and those even more permanently and seriously damaged are frequently not participators, are withdrawn, introverted, queer, peculiar people whom others shun or at least do not seek out. Evidence of this abounds, in particular instances, but we lack general knowledge. The old question also still haunts us, as to whether these people prefer to withdraw and live apart because they are regarded as peculiar and not accepted by groups, or whether they become odd and diffident because they are progressively withdrawn from groups.

*Programs of Treatment.* At the beginning of this chapter and throughout our discussion, we have talked in terms of mental health as well as mental disorder, so as to give the problem a positive focus. The broad program of treatment may be summed up under the mental-hygiene program, a term which has come increasingly into use. The basis of the whole movement is preventive, aiding the deviate before his conflicts become too great for him, his family, and environment. If isolation is necessary, this is made a period for treatment and planning toward his renewed life in the community which he left. Preventive work, looking for danger signals, has been begun in schools. Child-guidance clinics have done pioneer work in their efforts to help children overcome their awk-

wardness, their behavior difficulties, and to place them in a more favorable position with their associates. Mental-hygiene clinics are also provided for adults. Most of these are state supported and state controlled, but a number of privately maintained clinics exist, and the services of individual psychiatrists are also available.

But in spite of the progress along these lines, not all individuals respond to treatment, nor is there opportunity for treatment of all before it is too late. Hence some custodial care must always be provided. Institutions privately and publicly operated for the care and treatment of mental patients are numerous and superficially well known. Some idea of these resources will re-emphasize the magnitude of the problem. In one study of institutional care of mental patients, 631 hospitals were reported,[26] 351 of which were owned and controlled by governmental agencies. The remaining 280 were privately owned. In 1935, according to the *Social Work Year Book,* resources for the care of mental patients included 592 public and private hospitals with a total of 530,522 beds. Forty-five states provided separate institutions for the mentally diseased. Twenty-two states operated series of mental-hygiene clinics, and in 586 communities psychiatric-clinic services are available to children.[27]

The work of the institutions and clinics cannot be described in figures alone, because the problem is qualitative as well as quantitative. Just as there is a wide variance in mental symptoms and afflictions, so too is the response to treatment varied and the need for institutional care fluctuating. Institutionalization, of itself, provides a limited and protected form of participation to the inmates. Not all need this care indefinitely, so that a program of parole has been developed for those who appear to be able to adjust to another environment outside the institution. Under such a system,

[26] J. M. Grimes, *Institutional Care of Mental Patients in the United States* (1934), p. 2.

[27] "Mental Hygiene," *Social Work Year Book, 1937,* p. 283.

the individual is released under supervision to engage in some specific or restricted occupation or to receive the care of relatives, friends, or boarding home. In all of these situations, the patient has restrictions imposed by the doctor and by his own limitations, but his degree of participation is distinctly enlarged, and he has some work to perform. The colony plan, which is discussed more at length in the succeeding chapter, has been used with some mental patients. Even within the institution, emphasis is more and more placed on the training of the patients and the assigning of some useful task within their capabilities. The spirit of mental hygiene today is to build up the individual to the utmost of his ability to adjust socially. The efforts in all the better hospitals, both public and private, are directed toward the end of rehabilitation, where possible, rather than mere custodial care of a nuisance or a menace.

## Suggested Readings

Bassett, Clara, *Mental Hygiene in the Community*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934. General statement of the mental-hygiene movement in school, industry, and social work.

Faris, Robert E. L., and Dunham, H. Warren, *Mental Disorders in Urban Areas*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939. An ecological study of schizophrenia and other psychoses, with emphasis on their social implications.

Landis, Carney, and Page, James D., *Modern Society and Mental Disease*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1938. An excellent analysis of the characteristics of patients in mental hospitals, prevalence of mental illness, outcome for patients. Bibliography.

Menninger, Karl A., *The Human Mind*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1930. Readable and scholarly presentation of types of mental disease, with case situations.

*Social Work Year Book, 1937* and *1939*, "Mental Hygiene," 1937, pp. 276–84; 1939, pp. 250–8. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Brief but comprehensive account of the problem of mental disorder and mental deficiency, with emphasis on the mental-hygiene movement. Bibliography.

White, William A., *Outlines of Psychiatry*. Washington: Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company, 1935. Scientific discussion of clinical types of mental patients and symptoms of disease.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Prepare a schedule to assemble data from students (and others) indicating their knowledge of mental disorders. Give the test both before and after reading and discussion of Chapter 10. Tabulate and compare the returns. As an illustration of items that might be included in such a schedule, we offer the following to be checked as true or false:

*a.* There are about 400,000 patients in mental hospitals in the United States.

*b.* Everyone is definitely sane or insane.

*c.* Insanity is a specific disease.

*d.* Insanity is known to be an hereditary trait.

*e.* A larger proportion of urban than of rural dwellers are committed to mental hospitals.

*f.* Some mental disorders are "curable."

*g.* A disproportionately large number of mental patients are Negroes.

2. Let each student fill out a schedule for one or more persons of his acquaintance who are usually regarded as queer, seclusive, erratic, show-offs, or otherwise deviates from the "average." Select, however, persons who are *not* in institutions, *not* considered insane or feeble-minded, *not* suffering from known physical ailments, *not* poverty-stricken. The schedule should include such items as: sex, age, schooling, occupation, interest groups—membership, attendance, office-holding, relations to others in group (cordial, tolerant, annoyed, hostile). Is anything known about such persons that might help to account for their behavior and status? Tabulate data from schedules, and note any central tendencies particularly in regard to interest groups, attitude towards friends, and other social relationships.

3. Visit a hospital or ward for mental patients. (Remember that you are not visiting the zoo!) Ask particularly about previous socioeconomic status of patients and their prospects of returning to "normal" social life. Observe how the prognoses differ in cases of dementia praecox, manic-depressive psychoses, paranoia, paresis, and the senile group.

4. From the appropriate state department and from the United States Census, secure data concerning persons in mental hospitals. In-

quire of the state mental-hygiene society, if one exists, whether any surveys have been conducted and whether copies of reports are available. Analyze data according to age, sex, and diagnosis of first admissions, diagnosis and length of time in institutions of those discharged or released on parole, and diagnosis and readmissions, also, if possible, length of time between release and readmissions.

5. If there is a local mental-hygiene society, or if a representative of the state society is available, arrange an interview. Inquire particularly about environmental factors in mental breakdown and the later social adjustments of persons suffering from mental disorders.

6. From White, *Outline of Psychiatry*, Henderson and Gillespie, *A Textbook of Psychiatry for Students and Practitioners*, and Menninger, *The Human Mind*, assemble data from case studies presented, showing onset of ailment, age, sex, diagnosis, peculiarities of social relationships, social participation, and other significant features. Combine these in chart form as suggested in Chapters 4 and 5.

7. If individual projects are possible, secure co-operation of the director and social worker of a state hospital, in assembling data regarding aftercare or follow-up of discharged patients. Note especially family status before and after hospitalization, occupation, earnings, conflicts with the law. Such projects will have to be small, limited to a few cases, and will involve the use of confidential records. A schedule of items should be prepared in advance and in consultation with class and instructor.

8. Inquire of state hospitals and vocational-rehabilitation bureaus as to employment difficulties of the mentally ill. What vocational training has been given them? Where have such persons been placed?

9. Read such books as Clifford Beers, *The Mind that Found Itself*, William Seabrook, *Asylum*, Millen Brand, *The Outward Room*, and note changing relationships of the patients to others while in the institution and after release. Note administrative methods used in bringing them back to participation in family and community life.

## *Chapter 11*

# MENTAL DEFICIENCY: THE FEEBLE-MINDED

THE plight of the mentally deficient is somewhat different from that of the mentally ill examined in the preceding chapter. Some of the mentally ill may recover and go about their business in their usual manner. Many have known periods of normal social participation. With the mentally deficient, this is not usually so. By far the greater number are born with, or early acquire, defects of the brain, so that a limit to intellectual growth is soon reached. In proportions apparently varying with the degree of mental inadequacy, these persons are cut off from taking much part in the social life about them. They cannot comprehend or understand what is going on. Their associates are impatient with their slow responses. They apparently lack common sense about many things which most children pick up fairly readily. In the case of those of subnormal intelligence, but not technically feeble-minded, and with some of the higher types of feeble-mindedness, many satisfactory adjustments may be made. But in all such cases, allowance must be made for the defect. There is no eliminating or curing it.

Early in this book, we discussed the Calkins brothers. Handicapped, to be sure, by many other social factors besides limited intelligence, they appeared surly, aloof, coarse, and unwanted as social companions by any except their kinsmen, who seemed to have been more bound to them by a feeling of clan loyalty than for any apparent pleasure taken in their companionship. They did not get on in school, could not perform any work except the

simplest tasks when supervised. Neighbors and acquaintances went out of their way to avoid them. They were decidedly social misfits. Fortunately, all persons with limited intellectual powers are not such social liabilities. Many inherently possess more passive, pleasant personalities and can fit into activities and jobs with a fair degree of satisfaction to themselves and to those with whom they are in contact. The efforts of all those working with the feeble-minded and mentally retarded are directed toward the goal of helping them to live comfortably in their surroundings. The story of Edward Walters indicates success in this direction. Susie's story has a far less hopeful note, but the menace to society which the Calkins brothers presented is happily lacking.

### Susie [1]

Susie's parents were definitely inadequate. The mother was of low mentality but probably not feeble-minded. Of the father, little was reported, although, at the time of the study, the home was broken and Susie was in an institution for normal children. She was the third youngest in a family of seven. Her two older sisters were definitely inferior intellectually, had I.Q.'s between 50 and 60, and had been admitted to an institution for the feeble-minded. Susie was reported "just like her sister Annie," one of those in the institution. Susie's health history was likewise poor. She had rickets and was blind in one eye, a congenital defect due to paralysis of the optic nerve. Wassermann tests, however, failed to reveal the presence of any syphilitic infection. The child also suffered from diurnal and nocturnal enuresis.

Although Susie was and had been in an institution with normal children, she had never become in any way a part of the group. She was very quiet, never talking above a whisper, and then confining herself to "yes'm" and "no'm." At the age of six, she was given a Binet-Simon test, but because she refused to talk, no results could be obtained. The examiner felt she could have talked if she had wished to, but she was listless and inattentive. However, she responded surprisingly well in the

[1] Western Reserve University, *The Social Adjustment of the Feeble-Minded* (1930), pp. 96–7. This story is adapted from a case reported in that work, by permission of Western Reserve University.

performance tests which were given her at the same time. After the tests, recommendation was made that she be placed in a foster home and then be retested at the end of a year when a more definite diagnosis could probably be made.

As no boarding home was available, Susie continued to receive institutional care, but neither she nor her companions derived anything from the relationship. Her presence in a normal group of children was a hindrance to it and slowed its progress. Also, she failed to make a satisfactory adjustment and was constantly left out of group activities and forced to depend upon her own resources for amusement; consequently, she just stood about outside the rest of the group all day long, leading a lonely and unnatural life.

### Edward Walters

Edward's early life was most unhappy. Deserted by his mother, he was left with his cruel, abusive father, who kept the child in an undernourished condition, and in drunken rages beat him frequently. Neighbors eventually reported the situation to the authorities, and the court removed Edward from his father's home and granted custody to a child-placing agency. Edward was eight years old at this time, a shy, scared little boy, looking distrustfully at everyone. He was in the first grade at school. Edward was placed in a home of simple standards where the mother was a large motherly person, the father a skilled workman, honest and direct. A foster brother some years older than Edward was also in the home. The housekeeping standards were not high. Neither foster parent had had education beyond the grammar school.

It took but a few months' time to notice a difference in Edward. He put on weight, his cheeks assumed some color. He moved more quickly, ran about and played with other boys in the neighborhood. He did a few errands for his foster mother. At the end of a year, Edward was a part of the family group. He had been given a small bank by his foster father and was encouraged to put in it the pennies given him for running errands. He became a favorite in the neighborhood for his cheerful disposition and winning ways. But his school progress was less satisfactory. Although the teachers expressed an interest in the boy and commended his pleasing personality and his efforts at schoolwork, he could not seem to remember anything taught and would fail repeatedly at what should have been simple tasks. The next year proved not much better, even

though he was promoted. A test at a child-guidance clinic revealed that Edward had an I.Q. of 68. Valiantly his foster brother helped him at home. He was rewarded for every good mark he got. He tried so hard that he received some promotions. His foster mother was determined that he should get to the vocational school or opportunity school which required a certain number of grades as prerequisite. Edward was clever in the use of his hands and showed an interest in mechanics.

But Edward's personality was his chief asset, especially his desire to be doing something. He started out with his foster brother on the latter's paper route and soon took it over when the brother retired for more remunerative employment. Edward enlarged the route. He had difficulty with his accounts, but his foster mother helped him, kept books with or mostly for him, accompanied him to the bank downtown to make deposits, allowed him a certain amount for spending money. When he had accumulated enough funds, he bought himself a bicycle. He still had money in the bank, for Edward was no spendthrift. The workers in the agency called him "the banker." The boy was a great trade stimulater. When the newspaper offered prizes for more subscriptions, Edward was always among the winners. At one time, he won a trip to Washington, and no boy was ever prouder.

Somehow or other Edward was admitted to the opportunity school. There he showed more progress, none with any academic subjects, but doing well with mechanical work. He finished his course in the machine shop, and, at the age of sixteen or seventeen, left school and secured a job in one of the factories at $18 per week. His employer spoke highly of Edward. He was a good, steady, careful worker, absolutely reliable. Moreover, he was friendly and pleasant at all times. He still remained with his foster parents, and still had money in the bank. There was no doubt in the minds of all those who had frequent dealings with Edward that he was definitely retarded mentally; but owing to other compensating traits of personality, the protection rendered him by his foster mother, the precepts and example set him by the foster father and foster brother, Edward succeeded where others might have failed.

These two stories, not to mention that of Matthew and Job Calkins, have been chosen, of course, because they represent contrasts between social failures and social assets. We shall be discussing various aspects of mental deficiency in this chapter, but here, for

the sake of simplification, let us set up two rather general criteria of adjustment, one economic and the other social. Without getting involved in qualitative evaluations, we may say roughly that persons are "getting along" if they can support themselves and do not get into trouble with society. Further than this, we shall not endeavor to go at the moment. Both Edward Walters and the Calkins family passed the economic test. Edward was certainly able to support himself. His requirements were simple, and he was able to meet them. In their fashion, the Calkins seemed to have existed without help from the state or county. Susie, on the other hand, bade fair to be a burden to the state for some time to come. Whether she could eventually be trained to be productive is problematical. Yet as we shall see, the earnings of some feebleminded have been surprising.

Socially, the Calkins brothers have failed, because they have been in open conflict with the law and must serve terms in jail for breaking the laws. Socially, Edward passed again. He was a valued member of his foster family. He had friends at school, among the newsboys, at church, and among the fellows at work. All liked him. He "belonged." Susie has failed this test also, for she has so far demonstrated that she needs institutional care, although the present arrangement may not be the best solution. Even among the children who are with her, Susie is hardly more than an inanimate object. None of the others pays any attention to her. She hangs around and watches their activities, silent, remote, participating not at all. It is still too soon to know what may be the final outcome for her. With care and skillful training, she may become less withdrawn. The supervisory factor is important, we know, for with all Edward's good qualities, we see continually the watchful foster family guiding and helping him, where alone or with persons of less understanding or making greater demands of him, he too might be a failure.

*Incidence of the Mentally Deficient.* Before inquiring into the

incidence of mental deficiency, we must pause and consider what we are measuring. It has been difficult previously to arrive at a satisfactory definition for certain handicapping conditions. It is even more difficult here. Some might think that our problem was simplified with the I.Q.[2] as a standard or tag by which we could label everyone and count up all those falling below a certain level. But even if this were an acceptable solution, we could not follow through, for the yardstick of mental measurement has not been universally applied. Moreover, doubts have been raised as to the accuracy of the measuring rod itself, although tests have been standardized and techniques for administering them have been improved, so that greater reliance may be placed upon them now than formerly. At any rate, classifications of degrees of feeble-mindedness, established in terms of the I.Q., have been accepted in schools and institutions dealing with retarded children. Generally speaking, those with the lowest grades of intelligence are called "idiots," the I.Q. ranging from zero to approximately 25; the next highest are "imbeciles," with I.Q. 25 to 50; the highest type of feeble-minded is the "moron," with I.Q. 50 to 70. Ratings above this are variously referred to as "dull normal," 70 to 90; "normal," 90 to 110; and "exceptional," over 110.

In spite of greater precision in measuring the I.Q., it alone has not been considered a sufficient criterion for determining feeble-mindedness. Inasmuch as some mental defectives do seem to "make the grade," a social efficiency criterion has been inserted in definitions. As recorded by the British Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded, and adopted in this country, the feeble-minded (morons) include "persons who are capable of earning a living under favorable circumstances, but are incapable

[2] The I.Q., probably a familiar term to most, refers to intelligence quotient, a ratio obtained by dividing a score on a standardized test of intelligence in terms of mental age by chronological age. The mental-age scores on the tests are based on an upper age limit of 16 years, so that the device is chiefly effective for determining the intelligence of children.

from mental defects existing from birth or from an early age (*a*) of competing on equal terms with their normal fellows; or (*b*) of managing themselves and their affairs with ordinary prudence." [3] In the case of idiots and imbeciles, it is generally considered that they are not capable of earning their living or of being taught to do so. The late Dr. Walter E. Fernald, former superintendent of the institution for the feeble-minded at Waverley, Massachusetts, laid special emphasis on the social aspects of mental deficiency. In fact, he inaugurated a very thorough study of each individual whose admission to the institution was being considered, under ten headings, popularly called "Fernald's ten fields of inquiry." In addition to the mental tests, the clinical criteria included physical examination, family history, personal developmental history, school progress, examination in schoolwork, social history and reaction, economic efficiency, moral reactions, and practical knowledge and information.[4]

The feeble-minded thus are mental defectives; but the broad classification of mentally deficient includes, besides the feeble-minded, those who are retarded in school, and those who may be lacking in normal intelligence, but are not socially inadequate. Mental deficiency is a generic term covering various stages of mental insufficiency of which feeble-mindedness is a specific part. As Davies has expressed it, the essential concept in the differentiation of the feeble-minded from those retarded mentally is the former's "marked limitation or deficiency of intelligence, frequently associated with other shortcomings of personality, which is due to lack of normal development, rather than to mental disease or deterioration, and which manifests itself in social and economic incompetence." [5] The mentally retarded may be potentially feeble-

[3] White House Conference, "Problems of Mental Deficiency," *The Handicapped Child*, vol. IV-B (1933), p. 330. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930.

[4] Stanley Davies, *Social Control of the Mentally Deficient* (1930), pp. 6–7.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2.

minded persons, but may often give evidence of social competency.

Naturally, with such an inclusive definition, it is impossible to get data on the prevalence of mental deficiency. Even in the area of feeble-mindedness, more precisely defined, we do not have complete statistical information. We are limited to special surveys and to reports of institutional populations and admissions. State institutions for mental defectives and epileptics have been reporting annually since 1926, although not until 1936 were the epileptics separated from the mentally defective. During this twelve-year period, the institutional population has grown steadily from 62,000 to 109,000 in round numbers, or from an average of 48 to 73 per 100,000 population.[6] Not all of these patients are in the institutions themselves, since about 14 per cent of the total are on parole. The percentage on parole is slightly higher than the 11 per cent reported on parole from institutions for the mentally diseased. Figures are given in the table on page 294. Admittedly this count is inadequate, because many mental defectives are still housed in other types of institutions and thus not counted here, and many more both diagnosed and undiagnosed are in their own homes.

Some authorities, on the basis of small studies, have made estimates of the total number of mental defectives which we might expect to be present at any time. At a rate of eight per 1,000 of the population found in England, where conditions of mental deficiency seem similar to ours, Davies estimated that the total number of feeble-minded in the United States would be somewhat less than 1,000,000.[7] This is a far cry from the 50,000,000 or even 19,000,000 conjured up by the popular guesses based on the results of the Army Alpha tests given to the soldiers during the World War. It is now realized that qualifications regarding standardization and administration of the tests were not weighed sufficiently

[6] *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 9.

[7] Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

in interpreting results. They doubtless helped to separate the more competent from the less competent members of the army, but it is obviously ridiculous to call one sixth to two fifths of the popu-

Table 30

PATIENTS IN STATE INSTITUTIONS FOR MENTAL DEFECTIVES AND EPILEPTICS, AT BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR [a]

| | NUMBER OF PATIENTS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Year* | *Total* | *In Institutions* | *On Parole* | *Estimated Total per 100,000 Population* |
| 1926 | 62,349 | 55,201 | 7,148 | 47.8 |
| 1927 | 66,444 | 58,367 | 8,077 | 49.5 |
| 1928 | 68,269 | 60,412 | 7,857 | 52.3 |
| 1929 | 73,033 | 64,417 | 8,616 | 54.1 |
| 1930 | 77,592 | 68,035 | 9,557 | 55.5 |
| 1931 | 82,919 | 72,565 | 10,354 | 58.7 |
| 1932 | 87,553 | 76,726 | 10,827 | 61.6 |
| 1933 | 96,127 | 84,131 | 11,996 | 67.1 |
| 1934 | 100,605 | 87,382 | 13,223 | 69.2 |
| 1935 | 103,227 | 89,760 | 13,467 | 70.6 |
| 1936 | 106,217 | 91,754 | 14,463 | 71.7 |
| 1937 | 109,265 | 94,181 | 15,084 | 73.1 |

[a] *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 9.

lation feeble-minded. In such a usage, the term almost ceases to have any meaning.[8]

The White House Conference Committee studying the problem made an estimate about twice that of Davies, but admitted that it seemed large.

To be sure, a substantial percentage of the population undoubtedly falls in the feeble-minded class; some writers place it as high as 2 per

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

cent although a somewhat lower figure is probably a safer estimate. The group of the severely handicapped is much smaller, however, than that made up of the slightly handicapped; fully 15 per cent of the total population falls within the range of low intelligence in which the feeble-minded are included, that is below the psychometric level equivalent to only twelve years mental age in the adult.[9]

Whatever estimate is accepted, a large number of persons need protection, and about six times that number need some special help because of mental inadequacies. All of these face various problems of adjustment in whatever social group they may live, whether segregated or otherwise.

Table 31 shows that the number of male patients in institutions is greater than the number of female patients. However, the difference is not so marked as with the so-called insane. Inasmuch as we do not know how representative the institutional populations are nor the numbers of feeble-minded in the community, we cannot state anything about the sex ratio of the feeble-minded in general. A current impression seems to be that, among mental defectives as among the mentally disordered, females are more apt to be cared for in their homes. Apparently there is less delinquent or troublesome behavior accompanying the defect among girls and women than among boys and men. Yet there are those who feel that many of these girls are imposed upon, and contribute to the illegitimacy rate and minor sex offenses. We need more evidence to corroborate or reject these impressions.

The definition of feeble-mindedness implies that the condition is apparent from birth or early infancy. It is thus reasonable to expect most of the feeble-minded to be children and young people. Fortunately, the feeble-minded are not long-lived, although, on visits to institutions, we may frequently see adults as well as children about the grounds and buildings. The more gross the mental

[9] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, pp. 330–1. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930.

Table 31

MENTAL DEFECTIVES IN INSTITUTIONS, 1936, POPULATION AT BEGINNING AND END OF YEAR AND MOVEMENT DURING YEAR [a]

| *Population Changes* | MENTAL DEFECTIVES *Total* | *Male* | *Female* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Patients on Books at Beginning of Year | 91,154 | 47,653 | 43,501 |
| In Institutions | 78,745 | 40,098 | 38,647 |
| On Parole or Otherwise Absent | 12,409 | 7,555 | 4,854 |
| Admissions During Year | 9,674 | 5,331 | 4,343 |
| First Admissions | 8,217 | 4,356 | 3,861 |
| Readmissions | 585 | 347 | 238 |
| Transferred from Other Institutions for Mental Defectives and Epileptics | 872 | 628 | 244 |
| Separations During Year | 7,000 | 4,242 | 2,758 |
| Discharges | 3,984 | 2,374 | 1,610 |
| Transferred to Other Institutions for Mental Defectives and Epileptics | 1,189 | 787 | 402 |
| Deaths in Institutions | 1,785 | 1,053 | 732 |
| Deaths on Parole | 42 | 28 | 14 |
| Patients on Books at End of Year | 93,828 | 48,742 | 45,086 |
| In Institutions | 80,777 | 40,897 | 39,880 |
| On Parole or Otherwise Absent | 13,051 | 7,845 | 5,206 |

[a] *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 3. Omits 1,907 in such institutions who are classified as neither mentally defective nor epileptic.

defect, the younger the inmates are apt to be chronologically as well as mentally. These assumptions are partly supported by Table 32. Unfortunately, we do not know the age distribution of the total institutional population. But reasoning from these data and from extensive observation, we have no doubt that the general age level of the feeble-minded is low. The medians for the different classes are of further significance. The median age for idiots is 10.5 years; for imbeciles, 14.5; and for morons, 15.9. In the two latter classes, the median age for females is distinctly higher than for males. The implication of this may be that the girls are less troublesome to care for privately until such time as they have matured sexually.

Table 32

AGE AND MENTAL STATUS OF FIRST ADMISSIONS TO STATE INSTITUTIONS FOR FEEBLE-MINDED IN THE UNITED STATES, 1936[a]

| AGE | MENTAL STATUS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Total* | *Idiot* | *Imbecile* | *Moron* | *Unknown* |
| Total | 7,619 | 1,128 | 2,367 | 3,589 | 535 |
| Under 5 years | 384 | 147 | 125 | 73 | 39 |
| 5–9 | 1,300 | 371 | 467 | 399 | 63 |
| 10–14 | 2,088 | 291 | 630 | 1,100 | 67 |
| 15–19 | 1,905 | 144 | 503 | 1,150 | 108 |
| 20–24 | 607 | 64 | 158 | 354 | 31 |
| 25–29 | 293 | 20 | 100 | 162 | 11 |
| 30–34 | 230 | 20 | 91 | 112 | 7 |
| 35–39 | 201 | 12 | 99 | 80 | 10 |
| 40–44 | 120 | 10 | 45 | 57 | 8 |
| 45–49 | 77 | 6 | 36 | 31 | 4 |
| 50–54 | 63 | 6 | 31 | 17 | 9 |
| 55–59 | 34 | 3 | 17 | 10 | 4 |
| 60 years and over | 26 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 3 |
| Unknown | 291 | 31 | 57 | 32 | 171 |
| Median age | 14.7 | 10.5 | 14.5 | 15.9 | — |

[a] *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 19.

Of the types of feeble-mindedness represented, the bulk (47 per cent of the first admissions during 1936) are of the moron level. It is this group which is most apt to constitute a threat to society and also to need protection.[10]

*Family Relationships of the Feeble-minded.* We could find no data regarding marital status of the feeble-minded. Doubtless that is because most of the available statistics cover only the institutional population which is young chronologically and largely below the

[10] *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 19.

marrying age. Most of the older inmates have been admitted at earlier ages and have had no opportunity to marry. The lower types of feeble-minded—idiots and imbeciles—probably marry very infrequently, as physical defects and peculiar mannerisms, so apt to accompany low intelligence, would keep many of them from being sought as marriage partners. However, marriage is frequent among those discharged from institutions, who are chiefly of the moron class. Those who leave are, on the whole, the better adjusted and display some semblance of social competency. Various follow-up studies of those who have gone out into the community have revealed more women married than men. For example, a study of 136 discharged from the State School for the Feeble-minded at Rome, New York, showed that 58 per cent of the women and 10 per cent of the men had married.[11] Since, as a rule, more men than women leave institutions, the marriage rate seems to be greater among the women. In this study, the investigator gained the impression that the women who married were more irregular in their sex life than those who did not, but many of the discharged patients of both sexes were found to have made satisfactory marriage adjustments.

Obviously the institutionalized feeble-minded are generally deprived of family life. They are separated from kinsmen and they usually do not marry. But in society at large, there appear to be a great many mental defectives who grow up in their parental homes and later marry. Social-service agencies repeatedly find them among their clients. Sometimes they discover mentally defective parents unable to support or control their children. Sometimes it is the children who are subnormal. In other cases, both parents and children are feeble-minded. Occasionally, there appears to be a whole line of defectives running through several generations, as was the case with the Calkins family. It was instances like this that

[11] Clara Harrison Town, "An Investigation of the Adjustment of the Feeble-minded in the Community," *Psychological Clinic*, 20 (1931), 45.

gave rise to the belief, popular twenty-five years ago, that all feeble-mindedness is hereditary. At that time, it was generally taken for granted that feeble-mindedness was a unit character transmitted through the germ plasm in accordance with the Mendelian principles. Concerning the Jukes,[12] the Kallikaks,[13] and other families, stories were told of successive generations displaying mental deficiency accompanied by physical inferiority, sexual irregularity, alcoholism, and other undesirable traits. Many readers of these narratives ignored the environmental factors of poverty, ostracism, limited schooling, and parental incompetence. They jumped hastily to the conclusions that feeble-mindedness was hereditary, and that sterilization was the solution of the problem. In recent years, these sweeping generalizations have been challenged. Abraham Myerson, studying inmates of two Massachusetts state schools, found that more than half of the parents had normal intelligence. A study of inmates of the State School at Letchworth Village, New York, yielded similar results. Still other studies corroborated these findings.[14] Nonhereditary feeble-mindedness was found to be due to birth trauma, infectious diseases of childhood, and glandular disorders. Thus, we know today that mental deficiency may appear sporadically in almost any family stock.

Now the recognized defective is often a great disappointment and a sore trial to his parents; sometimes he is the source of great friction. But there is even more prospect of conflict if the child is one of the "almost," dull-normal, superficially like his kinsmen, but actually incapable of meeting the demands placed upon him. Often his parents urge, scold, and nag, hoping to secure from him the behavior and achievement which are in accord with family standards. After struggling against impossible odds, he either "withdraws into his shell" or strikes out in rebellion. Sometimes parents are annoyed at the physical weakness of children from whom they have hoped for great things. Whether the

[12] Robert L. Dugdale, *The Jukes* (1910).
[13] H. H. Goddard, *The Kallikak Family* (1912).
[14] Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 155–7.

limitations be physical, or mental, or both, parental pressures are likely to induce obnoxious behavior, which in turn irritates the parents further, and leads to still more troublesome conduct. What begins as a juvenile handicap and adult disappointment often develops into disobedience and running away on the child's part with cordial dislike and severe punishment from the parents.[15]

How frequently such situations develop, we do not know; their representativeness, or unrepresentativeness, can be determined only by further research.

The feeble-minded child in an otherwise normal home may be prevented from taking part in many activities, although he has the protection of intelligent kinsmen. But in a home where he is one of several defectives, the advantage of living among peers may be illusory. There is likelihood of confusion, conflict, and neglect. Many adults make very incompetent parents, earning inadequate wages and maintaining a slovenly household. In such circumstances, the only program for a feeble-minded child seems to be institutionalization. However, there is a substitute sometimes resorted to, namely, foster-home placement.

To test the advantages of such a program for children of feeble-minded parents, a controlled experiment was performed in St. Paul, Minnesota, recently.[16] Two groups of 100 children, one or both of whose parents were feeble-minded, were selected for the test. In one group, the children remained in their own homes, and, in the other, were placed in foster homes. The children came from families of approximately the same economic status, which was relatively low. The children had been tested before placing, or in their own homes if left there, and were again tested at the end of a two-year period. Comparisons were made of the I.Q. scores at the

[15] Stuart A. Queen, Walter B. Bodenhafer, and Ernest B. Harper, *Social Organization and Disorganization* (1935), p. 140.

[16] Jessie Wells and Grace Arthur, "Effect of Foster-Home Placement on the Intelligence Ratings of Children of Feebleminded Parents," *Mental Hygiene*, 23 (1939), 277–85.

beginning and end of the time. The chief finding of this careful piece of research was that the average child of feeble-minded parents, placed in a foster home, had a definite advantage over the average child of feeble-minded parents, who was left to grow up under the care of those parents. The children placed under the age of five apparently gained far more than children who were older and whose habits were more firmly established.[17] The average I.Q. of the "own-child" group was lowered from 81.06 at the beginning of the experiment to 74.38, while that of the "foster-child" group was raised from 79.69 to 81.12 at the end of the time. The change in the "personal constant," considered by the writers a more accurate measuring device, was from 87.58 to 87.37 among own children, and from 85.28 to 90.18 among foster children.[18]

The implications of such a study are that feeble-minded persons apparently make inadequate parents, although undoubtedly there are exceptions. The plight of a normal or bright child in a home with parents of mental inadequacy seems difficult for both, and one which may create behavior difficulties in the child. As with so many other areas, we have still much research to do before these situations can be adequately assayed.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* As noted before, mental deficiency is no respecter of families. We may find an idiot or imbecile among well-to-do families, and few of us there are who cannot think of some such unfortunate case among persons we know. Yet state institutions are filled mostly with persons previously dependent on the state or private charity, or living on a narrow margin. The presence of low mentality, as measured by intelligence quotients, in areas otherwise disadvantaged by low incomes, sickness, and delinquency is common. The frequent combination of defectiveness, poverty, ill-health, and delinquency in the same home adds an almost insuperable burden to the mental handicaps.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 283–5.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 281.

of the feeble-minded child. That this conjunction of unfortunate conditions is not rare has been indicated by a study of 800 mental defectives in the state schools of Indiana and Illinois. Among other findings, it was reported that "the family stock of mental defectives has a high incidence of parents who are mentally retarded, economically poor, socially low, occupationally inferior, and morally degraded." [19]

We do not have much evidence as to the economic status of the patients on entering state institutions, and less about those at large in the community. Since many enter as children, they have usually not been employed and are trained for no occupation. As we stated, many of them come from families not very well off. But we do have a great deal of evidence concerning what happens to the patients after they leave these institutions. The emphasis in most such institutions has been changed from mere provision of custodial care to training which will enable the individual to re-enter society and become self-supporting. Follow-up studies of discharged patients have shown that it is quite possible for many to assume the burden of self-support. The extent or range of opportunities, however, is distinctly limited by the individual's ability. Tractable defectives can be trained in repetitive processes where a great deal of initiative is not expected. We saw in the case of Edward Walters that he could hold odd jobs and a factory position; but he had difficulty in handling money. The same is true of many others. Prior to the depression, opportunities were greater and earnings higher than is the case at present.

An examination of the statistics of those discharged from institutions for the mentally deficient furnishes some evidence regarding their social fitness. One classification of the Bureau of the Census is made on the basis of ability of the discharged persons to support themselves. These figures for 1936 show, as indicated in Table

[19] Charles D. Flory, *The Physical Growth of Mentally Deficient Boys* (1938), p. 94.

33, that more than half of those leaving institutions were considered capable of self-support or partial self-support, and, as might be anticipated, that those so considered were chiefly in the moron

Table 33

CONDITION AT DISCHARGE AND MENTAL STATUS OF PERSONS DISCHARGED FROM STATE INSTITUTIONS FOR MENTAL DEFECTIVES, 1936 [a]

| *Condition at Discharge* | *Total* | *Idiot* | *Imbecile* | *Moron* | *Unknown* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Total* | 3,545 | 166 | 717 | 2,526 | 136 |
| *a.* Capable of self-support | 838 | 0 | 34 | 773 | 31 |
| *b.* Capable of partial self-support | 1,028 | 1 | 203 | 814 | 10 |
| *c.* Incapable of productive work | 878 | 153 | 421 | 286 | 18 |
| *d.* Unknown | 801 | 12 | 59 | 653 | 77 |
| *Male* | 2,136 | 88 | 430 | 1,537 | 81 |
| *a.* Capable of self-support | 433 | 0 | 17 | 403 | 13 |
| *b.* Capable of partial self-support | 537 | 1 | 130 | 400 | 6 |
| *c.* Incapable of productive work | 477 | 78 | 246 | 142 | 11 |
| *d.* Unknown | 689 | 9 | 37 | 592 | 51 |
| *Female* | 1,409 | 78 | 287 | 989 | 55 |
| *a.* Capable of self-support | 405 | 0 | 17 | 370 | 18 |
| *b.* Capable of partial self-support | 491 | 0 | 73 | 414 | 4 |
| *c.* Incapable of productive work | 401 | 75 | 175 | 144 | 7 |
| *d.* Unknown | 112 | 3 | 22 | 61 | 26 |

[a] *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 24.

category. Although the males outnumbered the females, a greater percentage of the females was considered capable of self-support. Most institutions make careful preparation for the release of patients, either continuing supervision while they remain on parole, or discharging them to the supervision of their family, if the latter seems competent to assume the burden. This paternalistic attitude serves as a protection to patient and community.

As a step between institutional supervision and complete freedom, colonies of feeble-minded persons have been established. The

colony plan is a compromise to provide a work experience for some of the more socially adaptable inmates and yet offer sufficient supervision to protect both them and the community. Dr. Charles Bernstein, of the Rome State School in New York, developed this idea in a practical way. What it amounts to is the maintenance of a group of male or female individuals, whom the staff considers able to support themselves and to derive benefit from more normal living conditions, in a separate house away from the institution, looked after by a matron, and provided with employment in the community. Usually they go to work during the day, returning to the colony at night, but occasionally they remain away for longer periods of time. The chief occupation for the female-colony workers is domestic service. For a time, in Richfield Springs and Oriskany Falls, New York, inmates of colonies worked in cotton mills. The men usually work on farms. Of the few industrial colonies for males, the work available is largely limited to odd jobs and mechanical work about town.[20] The colony plan for both boys and girls has been considered successful. The residents of the colony are provided with more opportunities for the utilization and direction of their energies, and at the same time offered more opportunity to mingle with others and possibly to prove their ability to return to normal community life. The colonies have proved themselves of benefit economically and socially. They form a step in the socializing process of the mentally deficient as they pass from the institutional, more routinized life to the freedom of the community.

Some studies of the adjustment of "graduates" of institutions for mentally deficient have shown gratifying results, despite many failures, and have proved that economically it is possible for some of the mentally deficient to succeed. One of the earliest studies was that made by Dr. Fernald at Waverley, Massachusetts. It dealt with 1,537 patients discharged from 1890 through 1914. This

[20] Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 216–92.

study was very important, because it came at a time when custodial care and permanent segregation from society were the accepted modes of treatment and the educational needs were less recognized. After eliminating 612 who were transferred to other institutions and 279 who could not be located, data were assembled concerning 176 females and 470 males.[21] The study dealt with various aspects of their adjustment or failure, but, for the moment, we shall confine ourselves to the economic aspects only. At the time of follow-up, 27 women were married and not working, 23 were living at home not able to do much work, 32 were working at home under supervision, and 8, a mere handful, were independent and self-supporting. The remainder, 86, had died or been reinstitutionalized after a period of freedom in the community to which they went.[22] The men presented a somewhat similar picture, although more had been in trouble with the law. Twenty-eight were working and earning a living, 86 were working for wages in their own home under supervision, 77 were living at home and working but not receiving wages, and 59 were living at home not able to work. The remaining 220 had died, been readmitted to Waverley or other institutions, including 32 who had been sentenced to penal institutions.[23] The occupations were those of teamsters, laborers, factory workers, farm helpers, elevator operators, soda clerks. The wages ranged from $8 to $36 per week.

A later study of 389 persons released from Letchworth Village disclosed that 141 of the boys over fourteen and 46 of the girls were self-supporting, 19 boys and 7 girls partially self-supporting. Most of the jobs were unskilled; one half of the girls were holding positions as domestic workers, a third were in factories, and the remainder were waitresses or laundresses. The boys were in unskilled trades, helpers to persons in skilled trades, factory hands, farm

[21] Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 190–2.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 195.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 200.

hands, caddies, janitors. A small number had entered the army or the navy.[24] This same study showed that over half of the group were earning between $16 and $25, and only ten per cent were earning over $25 per week. The boys earned more than the girls.

Another study, made by the United States Children's Bureau, of boys and girls formerly attending the Illinois State Institution for the feeble-minded showed a fair employment adjustment. It covered 167 young persons under twenty-one who left between January 1, 1918, and April 30, 1925, omitting idiots and low-grade imbeciles. Sixteen of this number had been replaced in institutions, 151 had remained in the community the entire time, 134 of whom had had some employment experience. Forty-five per cent of the number were employed when interviewed. The median wage at the last job was $24.71.[25]

These results were compared with fuller statements obtained from a follow-up study of former pupils in special classes for the mentally retarded in seven large cities.[26] Since both of these investigations covered predepression periods, the opportunities and the earnings were better than would be found at the present time. This study covered 1,067 boys and girls of a possible 1,172. Sixty-nine of these had not been employed at all; they were found to be definitely among those with the lowest I.Q.'s. At the time of study, 61 per cent (71 per cent of the boys and 43 per cent of the girls) were gainfully employed. On the whole, these young persons had been employed the greater part of the time after they left school, but not as steadily as persons of unselected mentality. The boys averaged six positions each, the girls four. The duration of their first positions was short, but this is common also among groups of

[24] Florence Powdermaker, "Social Adjustment of the Feeble-Minded," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 149 (1930), Part III, pp. 65, 67.

[25] Alice Channing, "Employment of Mentally Deficient Boys and Girls" (U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 210 [1932]), pp. 70–96.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 1–69.

unselected mentality. It was really surprising that so many of them held positions for extended periods. Seventy-four per cent of the boys and 69 per cent of the girls worked for one employer at least a year, and 37 per cent worked for the same person at least two years. The occupations, as one would expect from other studies, were mostly unskilled and semiskilled, where formal academic training was not required. The girls were mainly in factories—performing simple manual tasks, such as pasting labels or operating presses—or in domestic service. Only a few of the boys were successful in learning a skilled trade. The earnings seemed very good, but were "upped" considerably, because Detroit was one of the cities included, and there a number of boys were employed by the automotive industries then paying good wages. The median earnings of the boys on the last-reported job ranged from $19 in one city to $27 per week in Detroit. Some in Detroit earned as high as $48 per week. About 14 per cent of the boys in all cities averaged $32 per week. The wages of the girls were lower, averaging from $12.50 to $16.50 per week. Only twelve per cent of the boys' jobs and ten per cent of the girls' ended in discharge.[27]

Just one more fact from this study seems especially significant. The investigators stated quite definitely that the study of the special-class graduates did *not* show any relation between intelligence ratings of individuals and the steadiness with which they had worked. Emotional stability seemed more significant than I.Q. The following brief abstracts show what the authors mean.

Bertha, age twenty-two at the time of the interview, had an I.Q. of 54. She had only fourth-grade schooling, was poor in all subjects except cooking and laundry, in which she excelled. She was neat in appearance, had a likable personality, and was able to concentrate. She had held only two positions in the last six years since leaving school and had been unemployed for a period of only one week. She had first done housework in a private family for two years, during one of which she was still

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 66–8.

attending school. Her second position, which she had held for five years, was in a paper-box factory in a manufacturing establishment where she performed several types of simple tasks. Her employers considered her a good, steady worker. When seen, she was planning to leave and marry.[28]

Phillip had an I.Q. of 78. He had left school while in the sixth grade, at the age of fourteen. He had only one week in the special class. He had held twelve positions with seven employers in something over five years. He was unemployed for two thirds of the time. The duration of his jobs ranged from sixteen days to four months. He had a court record for delinquency before leaving school. He had worked in factories, had been a helper on an ice wagon, a peddler, a bootblack. He could give no reason for leaving his positions. One employer said he was a good worker, but did not seem to stay long on a job.[29]

Similar results have been found in other studies cited by Davies.[30] Although the studies made so far are small and fragmentary, they support the common observation that earning power of the mentally retarded has not been high. An occasional person has earned a respectable wage, and many have been able to support themselves. Usually the girls have found employment in some form of personal service or factory work not requiring a great deal of skill. The boys have been in unskilled or semiskilled jobs, in transportation work, or on farms. Many of the individuals referred to by Davies, however, were graduates from special classes for the mentally retarded rather than definitely diagnosed as feeble-minded. The findings all indicate that there are openings for these people in occupations where initiative and skill do not count for much and the earnings are meager. (Earnings are probably even less since the depression.) We have accepted the holding of a job as evidence that a person is capable of participating in a work group, and we can see that the mentally handicapped meet this

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 31.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[30] Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 315–21.

test in a limited range of occupational openings. Some of them are quite able within these limitations to adjust to the social requirements of such groups.

*Social Adjustment of the Feeble-minded.* It has sometimes happened that feeble-minded persons who become self-supporting in the community cannot keep out of trouble otherwise. Per contra, some of those who conform to the laws and the mores fail to become self-supporting. The problem of living with other people seems hard for some of the mentally deficient. It may be especially difficult if the person has been used to years of regular, routinized life such as the institution provides.

Measures of social adjustment are less objective and less complete than those of economic success. Nevertheless, some idea of the competence of defective persons sent into the community may be obtained from various follow-up studies. Criteria of social adequacy are mostly negative, such as violation of specific laws or birth of an illegitimate child. Mabel Matthews made a study of 100 boys paroled from Waverley, using as her criterion the occurrence or absence of trouble with the law-enforcing authorities, and found that only two had been sent to a reform school. Three more had been returned to Waverley, but the remaining 95 were making some sort of adjustment and had not come into overt conflict with the laws and mores.[31]

Not all studies show as good results, but many have stricter criteria for social adjustment. Of the 389 individuals from Letchworth Village who were studied, 283 were adjudged to be making successful adjustments and the remaining 106 were considered failures. Those who were termed successes had had no conflict with the law, were well behaved, living satisfactorily at home, and were not dependent except on their legal guardians.[32] "Half of the

[31] Mabel Matthews, "One Hundred Institutionally Trained Male Defectives in the Community Under Supervision," *Mental Hygiene*, 6 (1922), 332–42.

[32] Powdermaker, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–7.

boys who failed had been committed to reformatories, and of the forty-three charges brought against them, sixty per cent were for some form of theft. Of those in the border-line group, fourteen per cent were in state hospitals and approximately the same number of morons had been recommitted to institutions for the feeble-minded." [33]

Readmission to institutions may be taken as failure to adjust outside of the walls, and is significant to us for this reason. More morons than lower-grade defectives are readmitted yearly, but this

Table 34

READMISSIONS TO STATE INSTITUTIONS FOR MENTAL DEFECTIVES AND EPILEPTICS, 1926 TO 1936 [a]

| YEAR | FIRST ADMISSIONS | READMISSIONS | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Number* | *Per 100 First Admissions* |
| 1926 | 8,171 | 766 | 9.4 |
| 1927 | 8,276 | 865 | 10.5 |
| 1928 | 9,405 | 782 | 8.3 |
| 1929 | 9,795 | 1,131 | 11.5 |
| 1930 | 10,137 | 820 | 8.1 |
| 1931 | 10,727 | 806 | 7.5 |
| 1932 | 10,676 | 846 | 7.9 |
| 1933 | 10,806 | 918 | 8.5 |
| 1934 | 10,570 | 824 | 7.8 |
| 1935 | 10,299 | 765 | 7.4 |
| 1936 | 9,884 | 770 | 7.8 |

[a] *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 23.

is natural since more of them are discharged. Idiots and most of the imbeciles represent extremely handicapped and inadequate

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

individuals, who usually cannot get along with other persons unless well protected. Morons, on the other hand, have much more opportunity to become social assets, but not all are able to adapt themselves to complicated situations existing in the community, even though they make satisfactory adjustments in an institution. Table 34 shows the relatively small number of readmissions during 1936. Not enough is known of the reasons for readmission, or the actual activity while at large, to judge what this may mean as to social fitness of the returned individuals or failure of the discharge system.

Another social failure is the individual who must be sent to a reformatory or correctional institution. This brings us to the question of the relationship between delinquency and feeble-mindedness, which is an area in which cause-and-effect relationships have been much exaggerated. Formerly, the two were considered positively correlated. Other factors have been subsequently shown to influence criminal tendencies. Some, like emotional stability, are identified with the person; others, like poverty, are environmental. In 1917, the head of a well-known clinic said that "delinquency and defectiveness are practically synonymous." Various studies of that period purported to find very high percentages of defectives among the inmates of prisons and reformatories. These studies are summarized in Table 35.

Two things stand out from this table. First, the percentage of feeble-minded among delinquents is considerably higher than in the general population. Second, the reported percentages of defective delinquents have steadily and markedly declined. An explanation of the first point is this: mentally deficient persons have limited understanding of legal requirements, limited ability to foresee the consequences of their own acts, and limited capacity to resist the suggestions of others who would lead them into crime. Thus, they probably break the law more frequently than normal persons do, are more frequently caught, more frequently con-

Table 35

PSYCHOMETRIC STUDIES OF DELINQUENTS BY PERIODS, 1910–1928 [a]

| *Years* | *No. of Studies* | *Percentage Feeble-minded in Median Study* |
|---|---|---|
| 1910–1914 | 50 | 51 |
| 1915–1919 | 142 | 28 |
| 1920–1924 | 104 | 21 |
| 1925–1928 | 46 | 20 |

[a] E. H. Sutherland, "Mental Deficiency and Crime," *Social Attitudes,* edited by Kimball Young (1931), p. 358. By permission of Henry Holt and Company.

victed, and more frequently institutionalized. An explanation of the second point is that psychometric tests have been greatly improved. Their reliability has been enhanced by development of examiners' skills and by retests of both normal and subnormal subjects. Their validity has been established in relation to other measures of mental competence and deficiency. (See, for example, "Fernald's ten fields of inquiry" discussed earlier in this chapter.)

Healy and Bronner, in a more recent study of delinquents, have brought new evidence of the illogical nature of the alleged relationship.[34] In an examination of 105 delinquent boys and girls and 105 siblings of those who were nondelinquent, they found that "skillful psychological testing shows that well within the limits of normal mental ability, according to standard age-level tests, there were 98 of the delinquents and 94 of the controls." [35] Speaking of the delinquent boys, they say, "we cannot find the slightest evidence that those of higher intelligence rating according to standard age-level scales did relatively better either during the treat-

[34] William Healy and Augusta F. Bronner, *New Light on Delinquency and Its Treatment* (1936).

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 60. By permission of Yale University Press.

ment period or subsequently." [36] Dr. Fernald, from his long work with the feeble-minded, made a distinction between "good" and "bad," or well-behaved and delinquent defectives. The latter constitute a small but troublesome minority, one from which much is heard, and the need of their segregation from society is obvious. If many of these are not placed in custodial institutions, they will no doubt find their way to various penal institutions. They are usually troublesome anywhere, since they are not adaptable as are the majority of the "good" defectives. Massachusetts, realizing the difficulty of working with these "defective delinquents," first made provision in a special institution for boys of this type. New York and other states have such institutions now.

Davies has neatly summarized the relation of mental deficiency and delinquency in these words: "while a somewhat larger percentage of the mentally deficient than of normal persons may drift into delinquency, this does not mean that there is any causal connection between mental deficiency per se and delinquency per se, but rather that mental defectives, coming frequently from poor environments, and being deprived of opportunities for wholesome contacts, are more likely to come under influences that will lead them into delinquent ways." [37]

There have been some other attempts to determine the capacity of feeble-minded persons for social participation. One of the most interesting was an experiment in recreation at the Lincoln State School in Illinois.[38] The responses of different types of defectives to different games were carefully observed and listed. While the work was done in the restricted environment of an institution, it sheds added light on the possibilities and limitations of the mentally deficient as members of social groups.

*Programs of Care for the Mentally Deficient.* In the preceding

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 190. By permission of Yale University Press.

[37] Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

[38] Bertha Schlotter and Margaret Svendsen, *Experiment in Recreation with the Mentally Retarded* (1932).

sections, we have called attention to some of the main provisions for the mentally deficient. The first thought of society in dealing with these defectives was to segregate them where they could do no harm. The movement for state institutions was begun in 1846 in New York State when a bill was introduced into the legislature but was not passed. The first school was started in South Boston, Massachusetts, in 1848 under the superintendency of Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe. It was later moved to Waverley, Massachusetts, and is now known as the Walter E. Fernald School.[39] This movement was to prove of great benefit both to the individual and to the community, for under such leaders as Dr. Fernald of Waverley, Massachusetts, Dr. Wallace of Wrentham, Massachusetts, and Dr. Bernstein of Rome, New York, institutions changed from places of mere custodial care to schools for training and educating the mentally defective up to the limit of their capacities. This concern for the mentally inferior, especially for their role in society, led to the establishment of colonies and parole systems by which institutional "graduates" are helped back into a more normal environment without having all their supports removed at once.

The success of educational attempts with mental defectives in institutions led to the provision in many school systems of separate classes for backward children, "to train them in social habits through which they may reach the greatest degree of success possible to their mental ability." [40] These subnormal children receive special instruction without having to be removed from the security of their own homes. Such provision requires facilities for child study through which backward and subnormal children may be identified. It also requires specialized training for teachers so that they may adapt curriculum and classroom methods to the capacities and limitations of their pupils. In 1929, there were 46,625 children in

[39] Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

[40] Meta L. Anderson, "Mental Deficiency," *Social Work Year Book, 1935*, p. 270. By permission of the Russell Sage Foundation.

2,552 special classes for those mentally retarded.[41] The establishment of these classes has helped to spare them the disappointments that attend competition with superior children. It has possibly eliminated some tendencies toward compensatory troublesome behavior.

Along with the educational and training program has gone some vocational guidance and placement. This is probably not more necessary than for normal individuals, except that employment opportunities for the mentally handicapped are more limited. In New York City, the Vocational Adjustment Bureau attempts to find jobs for women and girls handicapped by mental deficiency. It has found certain types of jobs which the intellectually inferior can perform better than those with more intelligence who grow tired of the routine activities involved. Various positions have been classified as to the intelligence level needed to carry them out.

Another method by which society has sought to exercise a measure of control is sterilization of the mentally unfit. This program, based on the theory of the hereditary nature of mental defects, so largely discussed after the much-publicized accounts of the Kallikaks, Jukes, Hill folk, and others, has not been widely accepted. It is beset with many difficulties—legal, religious, social, and diagnostic. Those who would most benefit by sterilization are the higher-grade feeble-minded girls. The difficulty of diagnosing feeble-mindedness with precision and the delicate nature of sterilizing females have proved major stumbling blocks in carrying on any program of this sort. After much controversy, twenty-four states have passed laws permitting the sterilization of the feeble-minded, but the law is really operating in only four states.[42]

We do not have statistics at hand to show the extent to which feeble-minded, within or without institutions, participate in general group activities. It would be difficult to make such studies.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 270.
[42] *Ibid.*, p. 272.

But we do know that participation in play and special-interest groups is fostered in institutions, colonies, and special classes. Probably more attention is given to the social adjustment of the mental defectives than to any type of handicapped individuals we have mentioned so far. We might venture to say this has been done by society as a protective measure in tacit recognition of the potential liabilities of these persons if not socialized in so far as possible.

### Suggested Readings

Channing, Alice, "Employment of Mentally Deficient Boys and Girls," U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 210. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1932. Detailed study of employment records of former pupils of special classes, and of two state institutions for mental defectives.

Davies, Stanley P., *Social Control of the Mentally Deficient.* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1930. The best general book dealing with social aspects of the feeble-minded. Deals with historical development, educational and training methods, studies of feeble-minded in the community. Bibliography.

Powdermaker, Florence, "Social Adjustment of the Feeble-minded," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 149 (1930), Part III, pp. 59–69.

Sutherland, E. H., "Mental Deficiency and Crime," in *Social Attitudes,* edited by Kimball Young, pp. 357–375. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931. Review of studies of relationship between delinquency and mental defect. Bibliography.

U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Mental Defectives and Epileptics in Institutions, 1936.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938. Statistics on population and admissions to institutions.

Walker, Helen M., and Schauffler, Mary C., *The Social Adjustment of the Feeble-Minded.* Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1930. Group study of 898 feeble-minded individuals known to various social agencies in Cleveland.

Wallin, J. E. W., *The Education of Handicapped Children.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924. Deals with various means of educating feeble-minded children, and gives results of some studies of special classes.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Handicapped Child*, vol. IV-B, "Problems of Mental Deficiency," pp. 329–90. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933. Comprehensive account of various aspects, incidence, education, training, and social adjustment.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Read one of the classic accounts of a kinship group in which many defectives appear (e. g., Kallikaks or Jukes). List separately the evidence of hereditary and of environmental factors affecting behavior and status.

2. Visit a day school for subnormal children. Examine the curriculum and observe how it differs from that of an ordinary school. Note age-grade placement of the children. Inquire how children are selected for this school. What follow-up is there after "graduation"? What is known about former pupils' occupation, marital status, group membership and activities, law observance, recreation, and so on?

3. Visit a residential school, colony, or custodial institution for mental defectives. Note the activities in which pupils or patients of different levels (moron, imbecile, idiot) engage. What percentage of inmates have left the institution during the past five years (not including deaths)? What supervision do they receive? What is their record as to employment, marriage, group life, recreation, law observance?

4. If any member of the class knows personally a family one of whose members is mentally defective, have him describe the handicapped person, his activities in and out of the home, the effect of his presence (or commitment to an institution) on the family, the reaction of acquaintances to him and to his family, costs of his care.

5. From the appropriate state department and from the United States Census, secure data concerning persons in institutions for mental defectives, and compare the numbers according to different levels of retardation, age, and sex. Tabulate the number of first admissions, paroles, and readmissions, by sex, age, and levels of retardation. How do state figures compare with those for the United States?

6. With the co-operation of the director and social worker, let one of the students undertake a small study of some of the "graduates" of a state school for the mentally retarded. What is their record as to employment, recreation, marriage, and other group life? A short schedule

may be formulated in class, and results subsequently tabulated and compared with follow-up studies cited in this chapter.

7. If there is a state mental-hygiene society, inquire whether there has been a survey of feeble-mindedness. Ascertain facilities in the state for educating and caring for the mentally retarded, number of institutions, special classes, and other provisions. Compare this with the needs, in terms of waiting lists for institutions, and communities without special schools and classes for the retarded and defective.

8. If not already familiar with them, examine psychological tests used in clinics and other institutions; e. g., Stanford-Binet, Bell's personality inventory, various performance tests, noting particularly norms and deviations from these, especially in the area which suggests subnormality.

# *Chapter 12*

# ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION: PEOPLE WITH LOW INCOMES

IN preceding chapters, we have frequently indicated that lack of income, whether earned or other, has proved a serious handicap to many individuals and families. Whatever the cause of the financial inadequacies, there have been the same devastating effects on those affected in poorer health, poorer housing, less education, fewer skills, and a generally lower level of well-being than of those more favored economically. Some of these inadequacies have been mitigated from place to place by educational provisions, medical clinics, and nursing services, and the recent "slum clearance" designed to raise housing standards and eliminate some of the unsavory places in which the poor have had to live. The chief implication for our purpose here is that many people, lacking the means to purchase even the minimum essentials for living, are gravely hampered in their social participation. We have differentiated here between two types of persons economically deprived. Perhaps the distinction is artificial, but we have felt that there is a difference between those families who, prior to the crisis of the recent depression and its forerunners, were perennially living on the fringe of subsistence, and those who, although habitually earning and self-supporting, were forced into a submarginal class, owing to the industrial upheaval. Naturally there is some overlapping between these categories. Many of the families with inadequate earnings, a number of dependents, and perhaps seasonal employment have been forced to seek aid from private or public sources

in their struggle to exist through the year. They represent a class of folk always poorly compensated, whose struggles for existence have been great.

Of the low-income classes here in the United States, we may recognize two general categories: rural and urban. The first includes sharecroppers, renters, and farm laborers, who eke out a bare subsistence and rarely seem able to lift themselves from their unenviable status. In Chapter 17, which deals with class barriers and the "poor whites," such families are described; so that here we have sought our illustrations primarily from the other type, the low-paid urban workers. These include most factory workers and common laborers, unskilled persons whose maximum rates of earning are never high, whose employment carries with it no security of tenure, little hope of advancement. Little opportunity to save comes to any of these families. Now and again they must seek aid from others. They live in crowded tenements, furnish much of the man power for industry. Such a family was that of Albert Ryder.

### The Ryder Family

Albert Ryder was born in Pennsylvania. His father was a farmer, making anything but a prosperous living and with many children to support. When Albert was a small boy, his father died and the struggles of the large family were intensified. Mrs. Ryder worked out by the day, and the children worked on the farm. Albert left school at the age of nine and, according to his claim, learned the trade of carpenter. Although he had some ability along this line and was a good workman, he was probably never in the class of a skilled carpenter. At the age of fourteen, he decided to leave his crowded family home and start out for himself, supporting himself by his trade. For a number of years, he was an itinerant carpenter, staying in one place sometimes for several months, sometimes for a shorter period. In a Middle Western city, he met at his boardinghouse a young woman, raised on a farm like himself, but now working in the city. They were married. This was back in the early years of the century, when this Middle Western city was growing and the demand for labor was greater than the supply.

Albert Ryder kept his job, and Mrs. Ryder continued working even after their first baby was born. Shortly after the second baby came, Albert Ryder was hurt in an accident and was out of work for some time. He went back to work before he was fully recovered, and could not seem to earn as much as formerly. Mrs. Ryder then took in washings to help out. Two more children came. Mrs. Ryder continued to try and do laundry work. Mr. Ryder held some jobs, but missed much work because of his weakened physical condition. The family was living in two damp basement rooms too small for so large a family. The children were all sickly. Mrs. Ryder had grown careless and unkempt. When she was pregnant with her fifth child, the family was forced to seek aid from a private social agency. Mr. Ryder had lost his job. Mrs. Ryder was unable to work. The children needed medical attention badly. Financial aid was given the family, and the agency arranged at once their removal to slightly better living quarters. The agency also furnished clothing for the baby, and some bedding.

Fortunately, the family was not long in need of help, as Mr. Ryder located a job with a wrecking company. This lasted for only a short time, but was followed by subsequent jobs with a construction company as a laborer. The agency bent its efforts toward having the family take advantage of the clinics for care of the children who now numbered six. Mrs. Ryder again obtained laundry work and eked out her husband's meager earnings. About this time, the oldest child, George, started making his contributions to the family income by selling newspapers, later magazines. Every cent he earned, he turned over to his parents. In fact, according to the agency record, this energetic little lad picked up many an odd job, although it was also noted by the social worker that he liked to spend his time reading wild West stories. At the age of fifteen, George left school and really went to work. He apparently had some sort of office position, and was promoted gradually to a wage of $10 per week. He continued to go to night school and planned to take a vocational course in auto mechanics. Mrs. Ryder was then able to stop working, since the family could get along when Mr. Ryder and George had steady jobs. The agency contact was soon closed.

The foregoing gives a bare sketch of the Ryder family. It does not really tell a great deal about them. Mr. Ryder was not a perfect husband, for he would go on an occasional spree. Mrs. Ryder seemed not

too intelligent and to have little idea of feeding her family properly. She could not seem to budget their earnings to advantage. The home, when the agency first entered, was pitiful, lacking in all comforts and decencies. Even in the somewhat better place to which the family moved, there were only four rooms for eight persons. They had to be assisted in getting the bare necessities in the way of household equipment and furnishings. The children attended school with fair regularity; all were reported to be very good students and no trouble to the teachers. The four oldest children were all lively and active. They found their chief outlets at a neighborhood settlement house, where they participated in various activities. No records of any delinquencies were noted. The home life seems to have been fairly adequate, for all seemed attached to each other, and a marked feeling of family unity was apparent.

One more note before closing the record of the Ryders. This same family came to a child-caring agency, some years later, asking for placement of the two youngest children. The parents had both died, and most of the other children were married. But, at the death of the mother, they felt unable to give the younger children proper care. All were working at the time, and there was no question that the board money for the children would be forthcoming even though the depression was well under way. The family had had no financial aid since the previous contact with the social agency. One by one, the children had gone to work, turning in their earnings to the family until they married and left. Although the family had not had a great deal, they had been independent during the entire time, a period of about fifteen years.

### The Capodannos

One day in 1922, somebody reported to the Visiting Nurse Association that the Capodanno baby was not well. When the nurse went to the house, she found five undernourished children, and their mother in much the same condition. They occupied a rather poor four-room tenement for which they paid $12 a month rent. There were no screens, and the house was full of flies which swarmed over the baby in her crib. The house was dirty, as were the children's clothes. Mrs. Capodanno spoke no English and seemed almost hopelessly ignorant of everything. Mr. Capodanno was working in a meat-packing house, receiving 37½ cents an hour; but some days there was no work, so

he was lucky to get $15 a week. Obviously, this was not enough for a family of seven.

Mr. Capodanno came to the United States fifteen years ago and had lived for the past ten years in the same city. He was a typical South Italian, with very dark eyes, black mustache, and bright-yellow knitted cap. He spoke broken English and apparently had little schooling in his own country. Because he had frequent colds, he was examined at a dispensary, where he was pronounced well and sound except for a slight bronchial trouble. Probably the colds and the irritation in his throat were due to working alternately in warm and cold rooms. Mr. Capodanno also said that the foreman gave him all the disagreeable, dirty work and in various ways "treated him mean." There was some difficulty in locating his name on the payroll, because the paymaster, not understanding his broken English, had written down "Carlton." It is evident that, being a "dago," Mr. Capodanno did not receive much consideration at his place of employment. After a time, he found a place in a restaurant in which he was much happier. But his wages were only $11 a week and his hours were very long. Sometimes he did not get home until twelve or one o'clock at night. Because of his wife's ignorance of English, Mr. Capodanno had to do all the shopping. Altogether he was carrying a heavy burden, and it is little wonder that he became discouraged.

Mrs. Capodanno, also a native of Italy, was nine years her husband's junior. She spoke no English at all and was illiterate in her own language. She was ignorant of nearly everything that is necessary to make a successful housewife. For example, she gave the children coffee to drink and let them eat uncooked macaroni. She could see no reason for learning English, but she did try to keep an account of household expenditures, under the guidance of the social worker. Mrs. Capodanno, perhaps in accordance with Italian folkways, was rather completely dominated by her husband. She asked his permission for almost everything the social worker wanted her to do.

There were five children when the Family Welfare Society first made the acquaintance of the Capodannos. In age, they ranged from ten months to eight years. During the next two years, the youngest child died of pneumonia and a sixth was born. The three older children were in public school and doing as well as could be expected in view of their lack of proper food and clothing.

Material relief has been provided in the shape of groceries, milk, coal, clothing, and a layette for the new baby. But, of course, mere relief could not solve the problems of the Capodanno family. In fact, the combination of poorly paid work, lack of special skill, general ignorance, large family, and poor health is not an easy one to break.

A visiting nurse went often to the home to assist on health problems. Mrs. Capodanno was induced to take the children, with some regularity, to a clinic where they were weighed and measured, and sometimes examined more thoroughly. Mr. Capodanno went to another clinic where his bronchial trouble seemed to be improved. One of the girls was in a hospital for some time.

A church sent baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Two of the little girls attended one of its sewing classes. The W.C.T.U. "Americanization" worker offered to teach Mrs. Capodanno English, but never was able to make a start. The Salvation Army would have taken some of the children to a summer camp, but their mother refused to let them go. But the next summer, she did permit them to spend two weeks at another camp.

The visitor from the Family Welfare Society tried patiently to teach Mrs. Capodanno how to buy, cook, and keep house generally. She left health leaflets—which the children at least could read. She talked with Mr. Capodanno's employers, endeavoring to secure better wages and more favorable working conditions. She has been active in season and out on behalf of this family, but much remains to be done before the Capodannos can stand on their own feet.

On the occasion of a recent visit, the social worker found the house clean and the baby fat and healthy. Mrs. Capodanno was following closely the instructions of the visiting nurse. She kept a window open a few inches for the sake of fresh air. She seemed herself to be brighter and happier. But Mr. Capodanno was out of work. The restaurant had closed. There have been some personal gains, but unless they are relieved of the economic insecurity, the Capodannos may easily become demoralized again.

These two examples are probably typical of many an urban family forced to exist on the meager earnings of a laborer or other small wage earner. They have a number of points in common. In the first place, neither father was a shiftless bum, trying to main-

tain a parasitic existence through the bounty of charity or the alleged rights to a living owed him by the world. Both men were hard workers. There is a lack of stability in Mr. Ryder's work record, although he had several periods of good employment lasting for a number of years with intermittent layoffs. Mr. Capodanno was more steadily employed, until the restaurant closed entirely. They were responsible men and were concerned about their families. But their second common trait was a drawback, the lack of education and training for something besides unskilled positions. Mr. Ryder had had some rudiments of carpentry but was not in the skilled-laborer class. Thus, they were both at an economic disadvantage in being at the bottom of the wage scale.

On the other hand, the demands of their families were not great. Much has been said facetiously about families with "a champagne taste and a beer income," but these two asked for no more than the barest means of subsistence. They accepted without protest poor housing, crowded conditions, insufficient household equipment. When sickness struck, they were without means to cope with the additional burdens. It is at such a point, when the discrepancy between purchasing power and a family's minimum needs becomes too great or continues for too long a time, that maladjustments develop and sometimes result in personal and family demoralization.

Yet one final point before getting on to other facets of the difficulties produced by low incomes. The earnings of the Ryder family were augmented at various times by the wife's employment. Later George brought his contribution to the family coffers. Women and children thus become assets in an economic sense, the small earnings of several making it possible for the family to get along independently. The financial asset of a second wage earner in families living on marginal incomes has been brought out repeatedly. In a study of 8,722 individuals who were placed on "made-work" projects during the current depression, the authors emphasized this point.

The study brings out very clearly the value of additional wage-earners as a means of supplementing family income. The Emergency Work Bureau families were especially deficient in this respect, averaging only 1.3 wage-earners per family as compared to 1.9 for the general population of the city. It is this deficiency which partly accounts for their condition. *An additional wage-earner lends more security and stability to family life than a savings account.* A wife earning only $10 per week would bring in an annual income of $500 per year; only a small fraction of the families had succeeded in saving that much.[1]

*Prevalence of Low Incomes.* Numerous studies have been made of families living on small incomes. Various estimates of the total numbers so living have been calculated from these specific studies. One reason for their divergent findings lies in the difficulty of setting an amount which would distinguish "low" from "adequate" incomes. If such a figure be set so low that all smaller incomes would constitute a menace to healthful and decent living, many actually inadequate incomes would be counted in the other class. Studies of costs of living and estimates of standards of living also show the necessity of considering differences in location and differences in cost of articles consumed. It is cheaper living in the South than in the North. Allowance for fuel is much less and clothing needs are not so acute. Living in the country near sources of food supplies is less expensive than in a big city. Costs of living in different cities vary, too. Then size and age composition of the family make one family's needs quite different from another.

Let us first consider the earnings of persons, according to actual amount received. Our first table presents a classification of family and individual incomes in 1929, a good year, when employment statistics show large numbers at work and earnings relatively high. Table 36 shows that 21 per cent of all families of two or more persons received an income of under $1,000. Nearly 60 per cent

[1] Ewan Clague and Webster Powell, *Ten Thousand Out of Work* (1933), p. 79. By permission of the University of Pennsylvania Press. Italics ours.

Table 36

## PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES BY INCOME CLASSES IN 1929 [a]

| *Income Class* | *Percentage of Individuals* | *Percentage of Families of Two or More Persons* |
|---|---|---|
| Under $1,000 | 39.8 | 21.5 |
| $1,000–$2,000 | 41.0 | 38.0 |
| $2,000–$3,000 | 10.9 | 18.9 |
| $3,000–$4,000 | 3.2 | 8.9 |
| $4,000–$5,000 | 1.5 | 4.5 |
| $5,000–$10,000 | 2.3 | 5.9 |
| $10,000 and over | 1.3 | 2.3 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |

[a] Maurice Leven, *The Income Structure of the United States* (1938), p. 145. By permission of the Brookings Institution.

received less than $2,000 per year. Six years later, in the midst of a depression, nearly 80 per cent of all families received less than $2,000. Over 40 per cent received less than $1,000. (See Table 36a.) Hence, we can say that in good times and bad from one fifth to two fifths of American families have to get along on incomes of less than $1,000 a year. Only in times of prosperity have as many as two fifths of our families enjoyed incomes of $2,000 and over.

The report of the National Resources Committee, from which data for Table 36a were taken, presents other facts about income in the United States in 1935–1936.[2] After studying a carefully selected sample of 300,000 families, the Committee estimated that in the year in question over 4,000,000 families received $500 or less; nearly 12,000,000 families received $1,000 or less. About 3,000,000 of these families received some form of relief. Of the other

[2] National Resources Committee, *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (1938).

Table 36a

SHARE OF AGGREGATE FAMILY INCOME RECEIVED BY EACH TENTH OF THE NATION'S FAMILIES, 1935–1936 [a]

| | | AGGREGATE INCOME | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Proportion of Families* | *Income Range* | *Amount (in Millions)* | *Per Cent in Each Group* | *Cumulative Per Cent* |
| Highest tenth | $2,800 and over | $17,164 | 36.0 | 100.0 |
| Ninth tenth | $2,050–$2,800 | 7,009 | 14.7 | 64.0 |
| Eighth tenth | $1,675–$2,050 | 5,102 | 10.7 | 49.3 |
| Seventh tenth | $1,375–$1,675 | 4,577 | 9.6 | 38.6 |
| Sixth tenth | $1,160–$1,375 | 3,624 | 7.6 | 29.0 |
| Fifth tenth | $ 970–$1,160 | 3,194 | 6.7 | 21.4 |
| Fourth tenth | $ 800–$ 970 | 2,527 | 5.3 | 14.7 |
| Third tenth | $ 610–$ 800 | 2,193 | 4.6 | 9.4 |
| Second tenth | $ 410–$ 610 | 1,383 | 2.9 | 4.8 |
| Lowest tenth | Under $ 410 | 906 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Total | | $47,679 | 100.0 | |

[a] National Resources Committee, *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (1938), p. 96.

9,000,000 families, nearly 3,000,000 contained five or more persons. Of the same 9,000,000 families, approximately 3,500,000 belonged to the wage-earning group, over 3,000,000 to the farming group. Altogether nearly 5,000,000 of these families lived in rural communities (open country and villages under 2,500), 1,250,000 in small cities (2,500 to 25,000), 1,650,000 in large cities (100,000 and over), the remainder in middle-sized cities. The Committee also found important regional differences. Receiving incomes under $1,000 were 55 per cent of families in the South, but only 32 per cent on the Pacific Coast, and 35 per cent in New England. In all regions and in all types of communities, Negroes received lower incomes than whites.

Since the National Resources Committee did not make separate statements for different industries and occupations, we fall back on the older data of Table 37 for light on this phase of distribution. It is evident that farm laborers occupy the lowest income level

Table 37

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF EMPLOYED WORKERS IN SPECIFIED INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS, 1910–1928 [a]

| *Year* | *Manufacturing* | *Public Utilities* | *Coal Mining* | *Government Employees* | *Clerical and Salary, Manufacturing and Railroad* | *Farm Labor* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1910 | $ 558 | $ 655 | $ 556 | $1,108 | $1,156 | $336 |
| 1920 | 1,358 | 1,662 | 1,435 | 1,648 | 2,160 | 810 |
| 1921 | 1,180 | 1,523 | 1,137 | 1,593 | 2,134 | 522 |
| 1922 | 1,149 | 1,486 | 965 | 1,625 | 2,067 | 508 |
| 1923 | 1,254 | 1,495 | 1,339 | 1,658 | 2,126 | 572 |
| 1924 | 1,240 | 1,500 | 1,251 | 1,708 | 2,196 | 574 |
| 1925 | 1,280 | 1,520 | 1,173 | 1,776 | 2,239 | 587 |
| 1926 | 1,307 | 1,525 | 1,339 | 1,823 | 2,310 | 596 |
| 1927 | 1,299 | 1,542 | 1,197 | 1,850 | —— | 591 |
| 1928 | 1,325 | 1,558 | 1,239 | 1,940 | —— | 587 |

[a] Leo Wolman, "Labor Groups in the Social Structure," *Recent Social Trends* (1933), p. 817 (adapted from P. H. Douglas and F. T. Jennison, *The Movement of Money and Real Earnings in the United States 1924–1928*). By permission of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends.

reported. Along with farm laborers in the low-income brackets are great numbers of industrial workers. Among these, different types of work command different rates of compensation. Generally speaking, there is some relationship between skill and earnings. (See Table 38.) "Unskilled" labor usually receives the lowest wages, for the common laborer approaches the market with little but his strength to offer in bargaining. As we go upward through the "semiskilled" and "skilled," wages tend to rise. Certain white-collar clerical workers are paid much less than most of the skilled artisans. Persons engaged in domestic and personal service are, on the whole, poorly paid.

Table 38

## AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS AND PRESENT VALUE OF AVERAGE LIFE EARNINGS IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS [a]

Estimates based on years 1920–1936

| *Occupation* | *Present Value of Average Life Earnings* | *Mean Annual Earnings* |
|---|---|---|
| Skilled trades | $28,600 | $1,430 |
| Unskilled labor | 15,200 | 795 |
| Farming | 12,500 | 580 |
| Farm labor | 10,400 | 485 |

[a] Harold F. Clark, *Life Earnings in Selected Occupations in the United States* (1937), p. 5. See pp. 4–12, and pp. 110–40 for fuller explanation of calculations. By permission of Harper and Brothers.

Although the better trained and more skillful workers usually receive higher compensation, geographical and industrial factors modify this relationship. Remuneration may differ for the same type of job in different industries and in different parts of the country. Common labor, which is at the bottom of all lists of wage rates, shows wide variations from a minimum of 36.4 cents per hour in the fertilizer trade to a maximum of 61.1 cents per hour in the petroleum-refining industry.[3] Labor in the South is obtained at lower rates than in the North, although differences in the actual costs of living have probably been exaggerated. Size of locality also influences earnings, in that larger cities pay, on the whole, higher rates.

The age factor in industry is a topic which has been receiving much attention. As we saw in Chapter 4, wage earners are superannuated at increasingly earlier years. It is difficult for the individual over forty-five to find employment. Youth definitely has an

[3] Leven, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–9.

edge in competing for many jobs, even where skill and experience are factors. On the other hand, child labor is notoriously underpaid. Whether in the beet fields of the West or in the canneries of the South, juvenile workers are paid at low rates and earn small amounts in the course of a season.

Women battle against a sex and an age handicap. That is, women are definitely lower paid than men, partly because they enter, on the whole, lower-paid positions, partly because they are less organized, and partly because, according to the mores, women do not need to earn as much as men. Women, too, reach their earning peak earlier than men. Wage rates or earnings of women are less than the rates for men, to a varying extent. At first, figures reveal a marked differential, but further examination shows that, as for other groups similarly discriminated against, the rate or the discrimination is on the basis of the industry or occupation in which the woman enters rather than the sex per se. It has also been held that women have less bargaining power than men, which is undoubtedly a factor of some importance. Women have, however, come into the employment scene in large numbers and displaced men from many occupations, possibly because they were willing to work for less money.

In Chapter 16, we shall show how Negroes are discriminated against occupationally. Not only are they paid lower wages than whites for the same work, but they are entirely barred from some occupations, especially those in which rates of pay are relatively high.

Although we have no figures to show the influence of union membership on total income, comparison of hourly rates usually reveals a differential in favor of the organized groups.

In considering income data, it is easy to be misled in several ways. Thus, a high hourly or daily wage may sound impressive, but it does not assure a large annual wage, for employment may be irregular. We have not paid much attention to stability of work

throughout a year, but the insecurity of the job is one which every wage earner must face. So many factors—seasonal character of the work, failure of orders, new inventions—may affect the amount of time actually required. An average fails to tell whether members of either sex, or of some ethnic group, or of some age class are discriminated against or are unable to earn as much as others. Hence, data on the average wages in an industry should be supplemented by detailed information concerning persons receiving less than the average. Wherever possible, annual income should be stressed rather than hourly, daily, or weekly earnings.

In addition, it is important to consider potential earnings during the working life of persons in various occupations. Table 38 summarizes the findings of a study made on this basis. It should be remembered that even the rather low averages shown here are not maintained uniformly during one's working years. Ordinarily one starts on a low level, rises soon to his maximum, experiences irregular fluctuations, and then drops again to a low level. In manufacturing, the most productive years are between the ages of 25 and 35, an "extremely short duration of maximum earning power." [4]

Thus, we find that family income varies with localities, industries, occupations, the number of wage earners, their age, sex, race, and organization. The National Labor Relations Act and similar legislation may reduce the extreme variations by fixing national minima, but as far ahead as we can see, there will be many people with very low incomes and a smaller number with large incomes.

*Standards and Planes of Living.* It should be obvious that a knowledge of income alone does not reveal a family's actual level of living, much less its standard. By level or plane of living, we mean the goods and services actually at its disposal. By standard of living, we mean the goods and services its members consider essential. The actual worth of an income depends then on what

[4] Evan Alderfer, *Earnings of Skilled Workers in a Manufacturing Enterprise, 1878–1930* (1935), p. 84.

it will buy, and the relation of this to what the family needs and to what it would like to have. There have been many studies of family income and expenditure.[5] There have also been studies of family needs on the basis of bare existence, comfort, and "decency." [6] Taken together, what these studies reveal is something like this. On the lowest levels, a large percentage of the income is spent for food; most of the remainder goes for other necessities such as rent, clothing, and fuel. As the income increases, a larger percentage is spent for education, recreation, group membership, travel—in other words, for social participation. After all, people must eat before they join clubs, go to college, and engage in other amenities of so-called civilized living. However, this does not mean that families on relief have no social contacts. Some of them retain memberships in church, some take part in activities at social settlements and municipal recreation centers, a good many continue their neighboring. Life within the family may be quite as intimate, affectionate, loyal, united, as on higher economic levels. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to suppose that when earnings are small most of them will go for mere subsistence, and that social participation will be limited. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted largely to the testing of this hypothesis. Once above the poverty line—wherever that may be—the use of funds over and above those required for bare existence depends on skill in budgeting, skill in the care and use of various articles, and especially on the family's standards, the kinds of things its members consider most worth while. This means that we shall not find anything like a perfect correlation between measures of income and of social participation, but we do expect to find a significant relationship between these two variables.

[5] Summaries may be found in the following works: Thomas D. Eliot, *American Standards and Planes of Living* (1931), chap. 2; Anna Roselle Johnson, *Standards of Relief* (1938), chap. 1.

[6] Some of these are summarized in Eliot, *op. cit.*, chap. 9.

*Family Relationships on Various Economic Levels.* In general, low income represents no obstacle to marriage and the bearing of children. Quantitatively regarded, people of small means are not deprived of family life. That there are qualitative differences between families of the poor and of the well to do, we strongly suspect, but cannot easily demonstrate. Even the quantitative evidence is not as direct as might be desired.

We shall consider first the relation between marriage and economic levels. Ogburn has investigated the percentage of the population over the age of 25 that is married, the percentage of the population over 15 that filed income-tax returns, and the association of the two variables. The coefficient of correlation was −0.17, which means that there was practically no relationship between the percentage of income-tax payers and the percentage of married persons.[7] Notestein inquired into the average age at marriage of nearly 18,000 women. All were native white of native parents, married between 1900 and 1905, being then under the age of 40, and in 1910 were living with their husbands. They were classified according to the occupational class of their husbands. The results showed plainly that marriage occurred earlier on the lower than on the higher income levels. Youngest of all at marriage were the wives of farm laborers; next in order came unskilled laborers, farm renters, semiskilled urban workers, unskilled urban workers, farm owners, clerks, proprietors, and professional folk.[8] In our ecological studies of St. Louis, we have found rather doubtful evidence of relationship between economic status and marriage. Comparing the 128 census tracts into which the city is divided, we related the percentage of each sex (aged 15 or over) married, with four indexes of economic status. The coefficient of correlation between the per-

[7] Ernest R. Groves and William F. Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships* (1928), p. 290.

[8] Frank W. Notestein, "Differential Age at Marriage According to Social Class," *American Journal of Sociology*, 37 (1931), 22–48.

centage of homes occupied by owners and the percentage of males married was .595, females .327. Between the percentage of homes valued at $3,000 and over and males married, the coefficient was .380, females –.158. Between median rentals and males married, it was .280, females –.205. Between cases on relief and males married, it was –.538, females –.026. These figures indicate that there is greater likelihood of men marrying if on higher economic levels. But between the marriage prospects of women and economic levels, there seems to be little, if any, relationship.[9]

Thus, it appears that, on the whole, persons of small means are as likely to marry as are persons in the upper and middle brackets. But loss of income, which is a common experience in periods of depression, results in the postponement or giving up of marriage. Several careful studies have established this point that the marriage rate declines in depressions and rises in periods of prosperity.[10] Thus, the probability of marriage versus bachelorhood seems to be related to changes in economic status rather than to the absolute level on which one lives. Incidentally, the studies just referred to show that divorce as well as marriage varies with the business cycle.

Family life involves not only mating but the rearing of children. On this latter score, the relationship between size of family and economic level is inverse. Speaking generally, the higher the income the smaller the family. Ogburn reported, in 1930, the largest families among unskilled laborers (3.91) and the smallest among professional folk (3.01). Second highest were families of skilled workmen (3.51); next came semiskilled (3.47), then proprietors (3.25) and clerks (3.04). In small- and middle-sized cities, families decreased as rents increased, but, in the metropolis, fami-

[9] Ralph C. Fletcher, Harry L. Hornback, and Stuart A. Queen, *Social Statistics of St. Louis by Census Tracts* (1935), p. 18.

[10] Groves and Ogburn, *op. cit.*, pp. 286–7; Dorothy S. Thomas, *Social Aspects of the Business Cycle* (1927), pp. 62–6; Roy Wenzlick in confidential bulletins of Real Estate Analysts, Inc.

lies were smallest in the middle class.[11] A study made by the Milbank Memorial Fund in eight cities during the early years of the 1929 depression showed an inverse relation between birth rate and income. For 8,000 families, the birth rate was computed per 1,000 married women aged 15 to 44. For families on relief, the birth rate was 210, for all others, 137. For those with incomes less than $1,200, it was 176; for incomes of $1,200 to $2,000, it was 145; for $2,000 to $2,500, it was 124; and over $2,500, it was 115. The study also indicates that for families whose economic status declined seriously between 1929 and 1932 the birth rate was higher than for those whose status suffered little change.[12]

As indicated before, the quality of family life on different economic levels has not been studied; hence, we can only report impressions. When incomes are very small, families often "double up," young married couples frequently moving in with the parents of either spouse. In some cultures, this is done regularly, but, in North America, it is not the vogue; hence, it is likely to involve friction. On the lower levels, children commonly turn over part or all of their earnings to their parents. Among some recent immigrants and some rural Americans, this seems to be taken for granted, but, in many cases, it is the occasion of rebellion on the part of adolescents. Whether divergence between the education of parents and of children occurs more frequently on one economic level than on others, we do not know. Neither can we say that the rising generation of any income class is more likely than any other to become imbued with "new ideas."

*Educational and Economic Opportunities.* When we discuss educational and economic opportunities of underprivileged urban and rural workers, we run into something of a vicious circle. We have

[11] *Recent Social Trends* (1933), pp. 685–7. By permission of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends.

[12] Edgar Sydenstricker and G. St. J. Perrott, "Sickness, Unemployment, and Differential Fertility," *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, 12 (1934), 126–33.

stated that they are holding unskilled and poorly paid jobs partly because their educational achievements are not great and they have no training to give them preferential treatment in an overcrowded labor market. Then their children because of the parents' low earnings are forced early into low-paid jobs, without receiving adequate education or securing any specialized training. Indeed, rural workers do not have many opportunities of which to take advantage, if they so desired. Thus, because they come from low-paid and marginal families, some must forgo education and vocational training and become like their parents, low-paid marginal workers. We like to feel, however, that opportunities for the children, particularly of urban workers, will tend to decrease the restrictions which threaten to create a permanent low-income class. Educational facilities in cities are certainly available. Schools are accessible, within easy walking distance of any family. Teachers are well trained and well compensated. Adult educational classes abound. In a city, therefore, formal schoolwork is available to most persons eager for educational opportunities and with mental equipment to take advantage of them.

With rural families, conditions are unfortunately not the same. Schools are less accessible, frequently miles from the home of the pupil, and often no transportation facilities are available. The school buildings are very often ill-equipped; teachers are young, ill-trained, and poorly paid. A large portion of these farm families are in the Southeastern portion of the United States, where the standards of education are generally lower than in Northern states and in cities. A further differential operates against the Negro and limits his opportunities, more because he is black than because he has a low income. Most rural systems in the cotton-growing region allow vacations during the picking season so that the children may help in the fields. As an illustration of opportunities available to rural people of small means, the situation in southeast Missouri is cited below. Missouri is selected because it is a wealthy state with

fairly good educational standards. But it is obvious that these standards are far from uniform throughout the state.

A considerable proportion of the children of high school age do not live in districts with high schools. The necessity for having to arrange with other districts for high school training discourages many of the children from attending. Of 572 eighth grade graduates in the rural districts in the spring of 1934, only 332 entered high school in the autumn. The administration of compulsory attendance lags when applied to the low income groups where non-attendance is frequently encouraged by parents.

The school system in this area is a multiplicity of one-room school districts, with poorly trained and low-paid teachers. The buildings and grounds are below standard, the library facilities are limited, and attendance even with a split term for "cotton-vacation" is most irregular. Only 24 schools out of over 400 rural districts are approved by the State Department of Education as being up to the standard set for elementary schools.

Of equal importance is the program for the education of the adult population. The extension centers at our state colleges with their County Agricultural Agents were organized to provide a link between the great wealth of knowledge accumulated by research agencies and the rural farm family. Much progress has been made by the Agricultural Extension Service but it has been unable to reach, to any great extent, families of the sharecropper and farm laborer groups.[13]

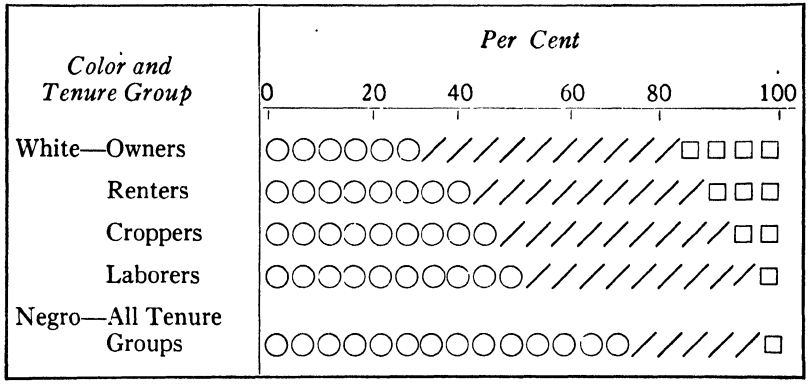
With such meager opportunities, it is not surprising that the educational level of the poorer farm families is not high. A definite difference in these achievements is noticed among the various tenure classes on the farms. The following chart, taken from this same report of conditions in southeastern Missouri, shows the laboring class and the croppers below the renters and owners in educational status of the heads of families. Taken together, the Negroes were far below minimum achievements of the whites.

The occupational opportunities are likewise limited for members

[13] Max R. White, Douglas Ensminger, and Cecil L. Gregory, *Rich Land—Poor People* (U. S. Dept. of Agriculture [1938]), p. 7.

Figure 1

EDUCATION OF HEADS OF FARM FAMILIES IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI [a]




Legend: Per cent completing:

○ Four grades or less
/ Five to eight grades
□ Nine grades or more

[a] Max R. White, Douglas Ensminger, and Cecil L. Gregory, *Rich Land—Poor People* (U. S. Dept. of Agriculture [1938]), p. 25.

of both urban and rural low-income classes, not necessarily because they are earning small incomes, but because they have so few and so rudimentary skills. Training opportunities are especially limited in the country. Jobs themselves are usually limited in any given locality. In the rural areas, they are especially scarce. There are usually no jobs outside of the small towns except in connection with farm operations. The tenant or cropper is able to realize so little that he is practically bound to his class. Since this barrier involves class as well as income, discussion on this point is deferred to a later chapter. Suffice it to say that the low-income groups are, on the whole, self-perpetuating. Exceptions, especially among urban workers, are outstanding, as one knows from the success stories of

those who rise to positions of prominence from bootblacks or newsboys. But, in general, the vicious circle continues.

*Friends, Interests, Group Participation.* We are interested further in the influence of income on recreational and leisure-time interests of these families earning so little. Are they more apt to stay at home, leading solitary lives, if the family earnings are meager than if they were more abundant? In general, is lack of income a barrier to social participation? For the industrial workers, we have found no specific studies which provide us with information regarding actual participation or isolation. While many outlets are open to the city dwellers—unions, church organizations, settlement-house activities—these are not always utilized. Frequently the lower-paid trades are not unionized. Hence, social and educational activities such as are provided under some progressive unions like the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union or the Hosiery Workers of America are not available for them. The Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.C.A. have industrial clubs, patronized by some persons of low incomes, throughout the country, but probably do not affect large numbers of workers. The cinema and dance hall are popular pastimes for those able to afford them. Membership in a club is often a vital part of a boy's or girl's life, and such groups, formal or informal, are available to some persons on every economic level. Our current impression, not verified or refuted by specific studies, is that a large number, if not the majority, of these low-income families are denied social life because of their inability to pay dues, and a lack of organizations to which to belong. In some company towns, for example, organized groups are feared. On the other hand, some opportunity for participation in paternalistically sponsored groups or pastimes provided by the company may be afforded. This lack of large-scale participation throws the individual back on home life and commercial entertainment.

Concerning those engaged in agriculture, we have more information. Despite the fact that isolation is often a joint product

of physical distance, low income, and class or race prejudice, it appears that some country folks have more social contacts and enjoy more cultural opportunities than do some city people with the same incomes. However, this should not obscure the more important fact that in rural America there is a relationship between economic status and social participation.

In Chapter 1, we mentioned an Illinois study which sought definitely to measure the amount of farm families' participation in group life. Lindstrom [14] studied 250 families in four Illinois townships to discover the participation of their members in unorganized social activities and in formal but voluntary associations. The latter was measured by the number of memberships, offices held, places on committees, dues paid, and the like. While Lindstrom's conclusions emphasize the factors of stability, education, and community structure, they also indicate a marked relationship of economic status to group participation. The results are summarized in Table 39 and in the following quotation.

> Voluntary organizations—the church, farm bureau, home bureau, 4-H clubs, cooperatives, social clubs, and lodges—drew their support chiefly from the most stable members of these communities, stability being measured in terms of farm ownership, lack of mobility, and extent of formal education.
>
> Other factors affecting interest and participation in community affairs are determined not so much by the habits of farmers as by the structure of the communities themselves: the proportion of tenants to owner-operators, the level of educational attainments, the stability or instability of the people as residents of the community, and the number and types of organizations functioning in the community.
>
> Of the 821 members of these 250 families who were ten years old or older, 55 per cent (including almost three-fourths of the fathers and two-thirds of the mothers) belonged to some voluntary organization. As a rule, members of the families that owned their farms belonged to more organizations than members of tenant families. Likewise mem-

[14] D. E. Lindstrom, *Forces Affecting Participation of Farm People in Rural Organization* (1936).

bers of tenant families belonged to more organizations than did members of families of farm laborers. The difference in percentage of membership was greater, however, between tenant and farm-laborer families than between owner and tenant families.[15]

Table 39

TYPE OF TENURE AND EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES BY FARMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN PER CENT[a]

| Group | Number of Persons | PERSONS PARTICIPATING | | | | Not participating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | As officers | As committee or board members | By paying dues | By taking part in program | |
| Full owner-operators | 89 | 22.5 | 22.5 | 67.4 | 22.5 | 24.7 |
| Part owners | 14 | 28.6 | 7.1 | 71.4 | 57.1 | 14.3 |
| Retired owners | 7 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 42.9 | 14.3 | 42.9 |
| Tenants related to owners | 18 | 33.3 | 72.2 | 77.8 | 83.3 | 16.7 |
| Tenants unrelated to owners | 251 | 25.1 | 46.6 | 49.8 | 8.0 | 31.5 |
| Farm laborers | 72 | 5.6 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 6.9 | 69.4 |

[a] D. E. Lindstrom, *Forces Affecting Participation of Farm People in Rural Organization* (1936), p. 109.

A more extensive survey of social status and farm tenure, carried on by the Farm Security Administration and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, contributes further evidence as to the differences between rural economic classes in their participation in social activities and formal groups.[16] In this study, special attention was given to neighboring, in order to determine what differences existed among these classes in visiting between families, having relatives, friends, and others in for meals, exchanging tools and equipment. They distinguished between the corn-belt and

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 126, 103.

[16] E. A. Schuler, *Social Status and Farm Tenure—Attitudes and Social Conditions of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt Farmers* (1938).

cotton-belt farmers, as well as between owners, tenants, croppers, and laborers. All told, 606 schedules were obtained from the corn-belt area, 823 from the Southern whites, and 723 from the Southern Negroes. Without going into the rather detailed analysis, we may say that the families of owners in every instance were first in all types of neighborly activity and other forms of participation. One of the most significant findings pertained to the contacts of farm owners with families in other tenure classes and with nonfarm families.

> . . . we may say that owners' contacts with non-farm families with very few exceptions are more frequent than with farm families of other tenure classes. Furthermore the frequency of owners' contacts with non-farm families is on the average much greater than that reported by families in other tenure classes, the sole exception being found in the case of northern tenants who entertain non-farm families for meals on the average more frequently than do owners.
>
> The northern tenant not only has non-farm friends relatively more often than does the southern tenant, but also he is apparently at no disadvantage socially in comparison with these non-farm friends.[17]

In organized groups, farm owners were found in positions of leadership more frequently than were tenants, croppers, or laborers, although these classes sometimes outnumbered owners in the general membership. By all the measures used, the laborers were shown to be least active socially. Table 40 presents the relevant data in some detail. Apart from general findings, it is interesting to note that in fraternal organizations the owners showed no numerical superiority, possibly because they were not so interested in this type of association, possibly because other classes had somehow acquired a dominant position. At the same time, owners contributed more in a financial way than did other members of the fraternal societies. The report suggests that fraternal orders actually are fraternal! That is, they may allow more crossing of

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 202.

Table 40

AVERAGE PARTICIPATION OF OWNER AND NONOWNER FAMILIES IN FORMALLY ORGANIZED GROUPS, EXPRESSED AS PERCENTAGES OF FIGURES FOR OWNERS' FAMILIES[a]

| *Item* | *Grand Total* | *Religious* | *Educational* | *Occupational* | *Economic* | *Fraternal* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Northern* | | | | | | |
| Maximum attendance: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Tenants | 90.2 | 88.8 | 92.6 | 59.9 | 47.0 | 118.7 |
| Laborers | 54.0 | 66.9 | 16.2 | 88.7 | — | — |
| Total members: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Tenants | 109.8 | 113.8 | 119.3 | 100.0 | 50.0 | 55.8 |
| Laborers | 43.0 | 56.8 | 12.3 | 35.9 | — | 16.3 |
| Total offices: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Tenants | 92.6 | 98.3 | 85.7 | 137.5 | 42.9 | 105.1 |
| Laborers | 44.2 | 58.3 | — | — | — | — |
| *Southern White* | | | | | | |
| Maximum attendance: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Renters | 110.2 | 108.6 | 114.4 | 228.0 | 9.5 | 666.7 |
| Croppers | 88.8 | 88.6 | 120.3 | 47.4 | — | 476.0 |
| Laborers | 34.1 | 36.9 | — | — | — | — |
| Total members: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Renters | 129.1 | 135.0 | 76.9 | 196.0 | 111.8 | 144.1 |
| Croppers | 98.5 | 104.3 | 66.2 | 80.0 | — | 69.1 |
| Laborers | 36.4 | 42.1 | — | — | — | — |
| Total offices: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | — | — | — |
| Renters | 90.0 | 110.3 | 53.8 | — | — | — |
| Croppers | 84.0 | 107.7 | — | — | — | — |
| Laborers | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| *Negro* | | | | | | |
| Maximum attendance: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | — | 100.0 |
| Renters | 101.9 | 112.6 | 6.9 | 56.8 | — | 79.2 |
| Croppers | 74.3 | 84.7 | 15.7 | — | — | 9.5 |
| Laborers | 67.3 | 76.7 | 17.9 | 59.1 | — | — |

| *Item* | *Grand Total* | *Religious* | *Educational* | *Occupational* | *Economic* | *Fraternal* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total members: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | — | 100.0 |
| Renters | 116.9 | 130.4 | 13.5 | 259.0 | — | 73.2 |
| Croppers | 77.4 | 87.3 | 38.5 | — | — | 12.2 |
| Laborers | 62.6 | 70.5 | 40.4 | — | — | — |
| Total offices: | | | | | | |
| Owners | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | — | — | 100.0 |
| Renters | 76.6 | 78.8 | — | — | — | 56.8 |
| Croppers | 47.9 | 55.3 | — | — | — | — |
| Laborers | 33.0 | 42.4 | 182.8 | — | — | — |

[a] E. A. Schuler, *Social Status and Farm Tenure—Attitudes and Social Conditions of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt Farmers* (1938), p. 210. Averages are expressed in terms of index numbers, with owners = 100 in all categories.

economic (tenure) lines than seems to be the case in any other type of organization except religious.[18]

Other studies of rural groups present no divergent findings. There seem to have been no corresponding studies of urban groups. It is our hypothesis that similar results would be shown by studies of persons on different economic levels in cities, and, as a matter of fact, there is some evidence in support of this proposition. Thus Chapin, in trying out his "Social Participation Scale," found a positive correlation between income and score on this scale.[19] The highest scores were made by white families of the professional and big-business classes; next came the ordinary business and managerial groups; lowest of all were slum families. Concerning both rural and urban data, it is impossible for us to say whether low incomes are cause or effect of relative isolation. Neither do we know what relation may obtain between personality traits, economic status, and social participation.

[18] Schuler, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

[19] F. Stuart Chapin, "Social Participation Scale, 1937" (University of Minnesota Press, 1938).

In concluding this section, we refer to an inquiry among students at one of the state teachers' colleges in Illinois.[20] This study, which clearly differentiated students on two economic levels, showed little difference in participation of the two groups in extracurricular activities. The N.Y.A. group of working students came from families averaging 5.9 persons, with a mean annual income of $850. The nonworking students came from families of 4.9 persons with an annual income of $2,125. A surprising thing shown is that 100 N.Y.A. students engaged in 158 extracurricular activities, while the 100 nonworking students engaged in 164, a negligible difference. It is difficult to account for this similarity. Perhaps it is peculiar to this type of educational institution. Possibly other years might yield other results. But it is interesting to note that the N.Y.A. students reported that they did not feel handicapped by lack of good clothes or by time spent at work. This rather exceptional finding should serve as a warning that further research is needed before we can say with complete assurance that social participation is definitely correlated with economic status.

*Programs and Policies.* Despite the obvious disadvantages under which families of low income labor, it seems as though the future prospects look rather brighter than they have for some time, because of the progressive nature of some of the New Deal legislation and the more liberal attitude gradually permeating the public at large.

1. INDIVIDUAL SUBSIDIES. The biggest cloud seems to be that of unemployment, for many of the jobs held by workers in this category are subject to layoffs. To alleviate this condition, unemployment-compensation laws have been enacted in many states, providing for payments during dull seasons to unemployed workers who have worked a specified minimum of time. Although late middle age may look like a hazardous period, workers generally

[20] Wanda N. Gum, "Social Adjustments of NYA Students" (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1939).

may look for an old-age-assistance grant when they reach sixty-five. In some states, the aged, because of the powerful political influence they wield by their ballots, are much better provided for than widows, orphans, and the physically handicapped.

2. WAGE AND HOUR LEGISLATION. Industrial occupations covered in the 1938 Wages and Hours Bill are protected to some extent against ruthless exploitation. A "floor" for wages and a "ceiling" for hours, while not affording spacious quarters for those crowding within its limits, still offer some equalization of economic opportunity. As yet, this law does not apply to agricultural workers, and current reports of sharecropper and tenant problems indicate that progress, if any, in adjusting these problems will be slow. Benefits from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in some states, instead of proving a benefit to cropper as well as owner, have forced some croppers into the even less advantageous position of farm laborers. Women and children have been protected by special laws regarding hours of employment and minimum wages. These different laws vary in coverage and effectiveness, but they have been growing slowly in favor, and add a little brightness to the worker's future.

3. OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY UNIONS. Among other things, unions have consistently stood for protecting the hourly earning rates of their membership. Unionism at the present time is having a spurt of growth not diminished by the factional strife between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Both have been striving to protect the workers in their bargaining powers, with the assistance of the National Labor Relations Board. Not only do union workers enjoy better wages than other workers, but the various activities of the unions provide them with forms of group experience.

4. HOUSING AND CAMPS. Other programs have certain indirect influences on the lives of the low-paid workers. Since our interest here has been more in the amount of social participation in familial

and other small groups, we have given little attention to the conditions under which most families live—the slum areas, the unclean, crowded quarters, the lack of sanitary facilities, the inadequate food and clothing which the families are able to provide. Recent legislation has struck at some of these conditions. The Resettlement Administration has offered opportunities to some rural families to live in decent surroundings and try, in more favorable circumstances, to wrest a living from the soil. The movement for better urban housing and elimination of slums has been planned to modify some of the sordid surroundings of city dwellers. But such measures have made little impression on most of the folk now living so disadvantageously.

Boys with nothing to do but roam the streets or haunt the poolrooms, taverns, or smoke shops of our cities have been offered a chance to participate in large groups through the Civilian Conservation Corps camps. Here a well-rounded program of various activities is furnished, including work, education, and recreation. We have not yet tested the full value of these camps, although much has been written pro and con.

5. SOCIAL SERVICES UNDER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AUSPICES. Perhaps the greatest achievements are those which, through public effort, provide various facilities for the use of rich and poor. Foremost among these are our public schools. In rural areas, consolidated schools and free transportation to these centers are helping to equalize educational opportunity. In cities, vocational schools are serving those who lack the interest or ability to profit from ordinary academic training. In both urban and rural districts, adult education is developing through university extension and library service. Special mention should be made of the agricultural-experiment stations, home and farm demonstration agents, and bulletins dealing with all manner of practical problems in country life.

Another type of public service that expands the possibilities of

social participation is the development of parks, playgrounds, and civic centers. In these are provided many kinds of group experience and cultural activity. Sports, dramatics, music, collections of artistic and scientific value, all contribute to the broadening of horizons for poor as well as rich.

A third important service is in the realm of public health. Starting with medical care for the indigent sick, quarantine, and other sanitary measures, public-health programs now include a wide array of services available to ever-widening circles of citizens. However, much remains to be achieved. Many communities are without hospitals; costs of medical care are high; co-operative and insurance schemes are developing but slowly.

6. REDUCED COSTS OF MEDIA FOR COMMUNICATION AND ACCULTURATION. Finally, people may be more closely in touch with what is going on about them, through the newspapers, cheaper radios and automobiles, and moving pictures. We have not yet reached the stage of a radio in every home, but there are few who do not have access to some such instrument whereby they can hear the latest song hits, sports, and news of the day. Movies at reasonable prices, even with the doubtful advantage of the double feature, are also available. Automobiles are cheaper. In fact, our whole luxury trade develops in the direction of mass production and low unit costs, and may eventually prove a leavener in our whole social scheme. We have a long way to go, to be sure, but we do see evidences of rising standards and increased opportunities for families with low incomes.

## Suggested Readings

Colcord, Joanna C., *Your Community, Its Provisions for Health, Education, Safety and Welfare.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1939. Outline of essential social services for communities. Bibliography.

Epstein, Abraham, *Insecurity, A Challenge to America.* New York:

Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1933. A study of factors making for insecurity and emphasizing the need for social insurance.

Gillin, J. L., *Poverty and Dependency*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 3rd edition, 1937. General statement of many of the social problems associated with poverty.

Houghteling, Leila, *The Income and Standard of Living of Unskilled Laborers in Chicago*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1927. Compares budgets of workingmen's families with a standard budget and shows discrepancy in many instances.

Leven, Maurice, *The Income Structure of the United States*. Washington: Brookings Institution, 1938. A thorough analysis of the various wage-earning and salaried groups in this country.

National Resources Committee, *Consumer Incomes in the United States*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938. Estimates of income distribution for 1935–1936 graphically and statistically presented.

Stewart, Maxwell S., *Social Security*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1939. Part II, "First Steps Toward Security," pp. 173–212; Part IV, "New Horizons in the United States," pp. 269–332. Summary of current provisions and future prospects. Bibliography.

Wolman, Leo, "Labor Groups in the Social Structure," *Recent Social Trends in the United States*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1933, Chapter 16 compares earnings of various types of workers and their competitive advantages.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Let each student make a list of ways in which economic limitations have seemed to affect his own life and those of his relatives and friends. *If he had had a little more money,* what groups does he think he would have joined? What activities engaged in? What articles purchased? Record for each person reported on: sex, age, father's occupation, religious affiliation, place of residence (farm, village, small city, large city). Instructor to chart the returns and discuss with class.

2. Ask each student this question: In the high school from which you came were the sons and daughters of well-to-do, middle-class, and low-income families equally active in athletics, clubs, student politics, social life? Were there cliques made up of students from a single economic level? From more than one level?

3. From the appropriate state departments, the United States Census, state university, and any other reliable source, secure data as to the distribution of wealth and incomes in the county and state. Be sure to include farmers, urban workers, income-tax payers. Compare findings with tables in the text.

4. From local, state, and Federal relief agencies (including W.P.A. or its equivalent), secure data as to individuals and families on relief at various dates, costs of relief, personnel engaged in administration.

5. If there is a professional staff in the local relief office or in a family-welfare society, arrange a conference to discuss the types of personal-social problems that are often associated with low income.

6. Have you found in the press or in conversation evidence of antagonistic feeling between those who do and those who do not receive relief? Report any instances.

7. Arrange interviews with local representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, A.F. of L. and C.I.O. unions, Socialist and Communist parties, farmers' organizations, and others that may have definite information and opinions about the distribution of wealth and income. Inquire of each concerning his explanation of chronic poverty and his observation of its effects.

8. Inquire of several churches what income levels are represented among their members and in about what proportion.

9. Inquire of local political leaders whether there is a tendency of any political groups to attract persons of any particular income level.

10. Give Chapin's "Social Participation Scale" to representatives of high-income and low-income families. Score and tabulate. Discuss factors other than income which may help to account for differences in the average scores of the two groups.

11. Examine some of the maps in Odum, *Southern Regions of the United States*, e. g., those comparing states according to various measures of economic status (pp. 218, 190, 198, 204, 260) and various measures of social participation (pp. 256, 232, 174, 144, 102, 98, 216). Discuss the usefulness of these various measures. Note that, in general, states low in wealth and income are also low in telephones, radios, libraries, and school attendance, but high in church membership.

12. Examine maps of any city which make possible comparison of various districts according to economic status and various measures of social participation. Such data are available for Chicago (Louis Wirth

and Margaret Furez, *Local Community Fact Book, 1938*), Cleveland (Howard Green, *Population Characteristics by Census Tracts of Cleveland, Ohio, 1936*), St. Louis (Ralph C. Fletcher, Harry Hornback, and Stuart A. Queen, *Social Statistics of St. Louis by Census Tracts, 1935*), and other cities.

13. Read in Breckinridge's *Family Welfare Work—Selected Case Records* a number of case descriptions and classify problems other than those of low income which are found in families covered. Identify particularly those which may influence social participation.

# *Chapter 13*

# ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION: THE UNEMPLOYED

THAT economic need is the basis of most problems affecting social participation may well be challenged, but there is no doubt that the lack of financial resources is an associated, if not a precipitating, factor in all of the handicapping conditions which we have so far discussed. For example, much sickness and malnutrition can be directly traced to insufficient food, light, and heat, or to crowded, unsanitary living conditions—all of which were imposed upon the family or individual by lack of money to provide better accommodations and nourishment. Again, it is much easier for one handicapped by prejudice, as is the American Negro, to gain acceptance, training, education, if the family is provided with funds to procure him these opportunities. Thus, the differential of race is somewhat mitigated by financial ability to secure certain material advantages. With those mentally handicapped or mentally deficient, the influence of economic pressure is less apparent, for certain treatment may be necessary in any case and can usually be provided. Many of the social responses of the aged are entirely dependent on certain personality factors or reactions between the aged and those with whom they are associating. However, in some instances, financial ability to provide alternative plans for these persons may make for better adjustments and increased participation on the part of all involved.

In the previous and in the present chapter, we are trying to isolate, in so far as we can, the influence of the economic factor per se, recognizing inevitably that it can never be entirely separated

from other closely associated elements in the individual's total situation. It is so significant a factor, however, that it is easy to trace some of the serious limitations it imposes on an individual's ability to participate socially. Our previous chapter concerned those marginal families just eking out a bare subsistence—tenant farmers and extremely low-paid factory workers. The migratory, casual laborer, discussed in a subsequent chapter, is another victim of economic deprivation. In this chapter, we are considering the plight of those ordinarily employed who, because of layoffs in industry, mechanization, seasonal or cyclical fluctuations, are periodically or continuously dependent for a livelihood on sources other than their own labor. The current depression with its widespread unemployment on every hand furnishes us with many examples.

### The Morris Family [1]

The Morris family consists of Mr. and Mrs. Morris, aged forty and thirty-nine respectively, and six children—four girls and two boys—ranging in age from three to sixteen. The family is American. Mr. Morris had learned the trade of carpenter, and had been working in a planing mill for a number of years earning $40 per week. Prior to the depression, the family considered itself well off. The Morris' had lived in the present working-class neighborhood for twelve years, paid $22 per month for a four-room flat, owned a car, owned their own furniture, had several insurance policies and food that was always adequate. The four oldest children attended school, did well in their work.

Family life and relationships had been very pleasant. Although there were no special family activities, they did go out together for rides in the car, went on some fishing trips, and were all congenial. The children played mainly around the neighborhood. Mrs. Morris did the marketing, kept house, and took over most of the disciplining of the children. Mr. Morris was described as follows: "Mr. M. was easy going, optimistic and good-natured. He enjoyed his home and family and took considerable pride in his job. He was congenial in his relationships at

[1] Story adapted from account of the M family in Philip H. Vogt, "Effects of Unemployment on Family Roles and Relationships" (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1937), pp. 52–6.

home and at work. He had no bad habits, kept his bills paid, and minded his own business. He felt that making a living for his family was his entire responsibility and seemed to pride himself in being able to do it just a little better than his neighbors. He spent his evenings and week-ends reading the paper or taking an occasional car ride."

In the late fall of 1931, Mr. Morris was laid off his job permanently. During the preceding months, work had been slack, but he had always had some employment, and the family had managed by rigid economy. Mr. Morris was distinctly unprepared for the emergency and could scarcely realize that he would not be re-employed. He seemed quite at a loss as to how to seek another position or how to occupy himself without a job. He tried to find a position, but to no avail. Mrs. Morris located some carpentry work for him, odd jobs which lasted only a short time. The family quickly sold the car and was able to secure credit since it had a good record. Mrs. Morris secured work as a housekeeper and Betty, the oldest girl, took over her mother's place in the home since her mother had to be out every day. Mr. Morris seemed ashamed to ask for a job outside of his own line. Pride in his skill made him feel that his workmanship should not go begging.

Through what odd jobs Mr. Morris could pick up and Mrs. Morris' work as a housekeeper, the family got along somehow until January, 1934, that is, for something over two years. By that time, every resource had been exhausted. As a last resort, Mrs. Morris applied for relief from the public agency, but Mr. Morris could not bring himself to go down to the relief office. The financial aid relieved an acute strain at first, but it could not prevent the disintegration which had been taking place in the family.

Betty, the oldest girl, had left school to keep house for the family when her mother went to work. She felt too that she did not want to return to school, because she did not have the proper clothes. John, the oldest boy, left the family home some time in 1935, at the age of eighteen. He had left school earlier, upon completing the eighth grade, to look for work, but he could not find anything. He finally went away telling his mother that with him out of the home, the grocery order would go further, and urging her not to tell the visitor from the relief agency, so that it would not be cut. Gene, the third child, had been truanting from school consistently and had been brought into juvenile court for stealing coal, but was released and put on probation.

During all this time, Mr. Morris' status had declined. To begin with, his role, as he saw it, was to be the breadwinner. When he lost this role, he seemed to lose everything. Mrs. Morris had become increasingly more important, while his status took on the appearance of that of the children rather than that of a father. He stayed at home a great deal, took less and less part in any activity. According to his wife, he seemed "discouraged and whipped." In September, 1935, after some nagging by Mrs. Morris, he packed his few belongings and left the home to live in another city. On leaving, he said to his wife, "There isn't anything here for me any more. You and the kids are kinda down on me and I don't want to hang around any more. I don't suppose I'll ever have a decent job again, so it's not much use trying to hold the family together."

### The Piala Family [2]

Mr. Piala was also a carpenter by trade, American born of Italian parentage. He and his wife, also American born, were both forty at the time their story was written in 1930 and they had three children, ages ten, nine, and four respectively. When working full time, Mr. Piala earned $35 per week. The family was buying a home, and carried insurance. Mrs. Piala was always an excellent manager and housekeeper. The children were well mannered and carefully brought up.

The depression hit Mr. Piala before it did Mr. Morris, as he had had irregular work for five years prior to the time the story was written. He had supplemented his earnings in a few other ways. The last two years, he left the union, hoping he could get more work at less wages, but this did not prove to be true. He also did electric wiring, made radio cabinets, worked a few days planting trees, and a short time at a machine foundry.

In its efforts to meet the unemployment problem, the family took in two boarders and cashed the insurance policies. They were behind in payments on the home. Mrs. Piala went out to work when she could get it, doing whatever she could. She had a job in a paper-box factory at $12 per week when the interview with her was held. The family had been in good health, and by the mother's careful managing, this was

[2] Adapted from Case No. 121, National Federation of Settlements, *Case Studies of Unemployment*, edited by Marion Elderton (1931), pp. 299–301. By permission of the University of Pennsylvania Press.

maintained. The children were forced to get up early to have breakfast before their mother left for work. The youngest child was taken to the grandmother's on the way to school. Mrs. Piala also had to come home and get a meal for the children and boarders, but she did not complain. Mr. Piala was quite submissive to his situation, but did not relax his efforts to try and find a job. The family postponed asking for financial help as long as possible.

The writer records the home life as harmonious and the moral standards high. She also concludes, "There is little thought given to relaxation, exercise, self-improvement, financing illness, or comfortable and independent old age. The entire efforts of the family are directed toward securing the basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing for the present. The children seem to understand something of the situation, and the wants that we consider normal are inhibited."

The problem of the unemployed in the depression took on an aspect new to those in our population who had never been close to the problems created by the poor and their needs. The status of poverty or dire financial distress and of unemployment had been ascribed to the shiftless, the lazy, the spendthrifts, whiling away a "grasshopper" existence while their more thrifty brethren, the "ants," toiled and laid by for the winter. But the histories of those coming to relief offices, to churches, to employers, who were neither shiftless, lazy, nor spendthrifts, brought the realization that no individual could shoulder full responsibility for the blame. Mr. Morris and Mr. Piala were both hard workers, had learned a trade, worked steadily, saved a portion of their earnings. Mr. Piala was investing in a home. Both were responsible family men. Yet both were alike unemployed, one dependent on charity from a public department and the other from a private agency.

But the members of the Piala family were able to marshal their resources better when the crisis came than did the Morris family. Perhaps, for one thing, the impact of the depression had not been so prolonged in the case of the Piala family, although we are told that Mr. Piala had had irregular work for a period of five

years. Perhaps because the children were younger, they had not felt the impact of their insecurity as greatly. There was a marked difference in attitudes of the heads of the households after some experience with unemployment. Mr. Piala was able to realize the situation far better than Mr. Morris. He showed much initiative in seeking other job opportunities. Mr. Morris could not think in terms of any work except that for which he was trained. Mr. Morris, also, could not accept a place in the home in which he had no productive part. Mr. Piala, on the other hand, although Mrs. Piala was carrying the burden of the responsibility, financial and otherwise, still maintained his position in the family group. The worker commented that the children respected him. The Morris children lost respect for their father; they definitely felt him inadequate. But in both cases, unemployment has forced a certain rearrangement in the traditional roles of the family group, which affected the degree to which the various members participated. Because of reduced resources, all attention was perforce concentrated on the struggle for subsistence. Any outside activity, relaxation, or recreation in both families was practically nonexistent

We have mentioned only a few of the consequences of unemployment. It saps the self-confidence of the worker who can find no market for his labor. It reduces his pride in independence to a mockery when he must seek public aid. Mr. Morris protested he could not do it, but "for the sake of the children," Mrs. Morris put aside personal feelings. Humiliation is felt by all members of the family group at receiving assistance. Children feel themselves marked when cashing grocery orders or having the case worker come to the house. Wives nag at their husbands as Mrs. Morris did. Children feel that they are burdens on their family. Most expenditures, except for the barest necessities, are eliminated. The family moves from one rental district to a poorer one. Malnutrition and sickness may result. All these and other consequences

may weaken family ties, may decrease social participation decisively.

*Nature and Incidence of Unemployment.* It is frequently amazing to realize the difficulty of getting exact quantitative data regarding conditions which seem quite obvious. Thus it is with attempts to measure the extent of unemployment. The variety of estimates offered at various times by government offices, labor groups, and impartial fact-finding organizations affords proof of the difficulties encountered. What does constitute employment or unemployment? How much or how many hours must one work to be considered employed? If one is laid off with a theoretical chance of being recalled, does this constitute potential employment? Should those who never did a day's work anyway be considered unemployed?

Estimates which have been made from time to time on the number of those unemployed have varied as much as 5,000,000 workers. Thus, in January, 1935, the National Research League estimated that 14,950,000 persons were unemployed at that time. About the same time, the National Industrial Conference Board estimated the number at 10,142,000 persons.[3] The broadest attempt to arrive at some accurate figures was in the Federal census of 1930, when a count of unemployment was taken, distinguishing between several classes of unemployed persons. Again in 1937, through the efforts of postmen leaving cards at the door, a further count was taken. The estimates from these returns have been summarized in Table 41. More specific and accurate studies of smaller communities have been made from time to time.

No matter how viewed, the problem is formidable even if only the minimum estimates are accepted. Although accentuated during these recent, crucial years, unemployment is no new phenomenon.

[3] Dorothy C. Kahn, *Unemployment and Its Treatment in the United States* (1937), p. 14.

Table 41

UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED STATES—1930, 1931, 1937

| | *Total* | *Male* | *Female* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total Population 1930 | 122,775,046 | 62,137,080 | 60,637,966 |
| Unemployed April 1930 [a] | | | |
| Class A | 2,429,062 | 2,058,738 | 370,324 |
| Class B | 758,585 | 627,407 | 131,178 |
| Unemployed—81 Urban Communities, 1930 [b] | | | |
| Class A | 775,560 | 647,254 | 123,306 |
| Class B | 138,562 | 113,818 | 24,744 |
| Unemployed—81 Urban Communities, Jan., 1931 [b] | | | |
| Class A | 1,930,437 | 1,511,829 | 418,608 |
| Class B | 367,814 | 307,139 | 60,675 |
| Unemployed, 1937 [c] | | | |
| 1. Totally Unemployed | 5,833,401 | 4,143,194 | 1,690,207 |
| 2. Workers on W.P.A., C.C.C., etc. | 2,011,615 | 1,673,788 | 337,834 |
| 3. Partially Unemployed | 3,219,502 | 2,657,917 | 561,585 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Census of Unemployment, 1930* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 17.

Class A—Persons out of a job, able to work, and looking for a job

Class B—Persons having jobs but on layoff, without pay, excluding those sick or voluntarily idle

[b] *Census of Unemployment, 1931* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), vol. 2, p. 366.

[c] *Census of Partial Employment, Unemployment, and Occupations, 1937* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 2.

Fluctuations of numbers unemployed have been evident for years. Douglas and Director noted variations in percentages of unem-

ployed in the manufacturing, transportation, building, and mining industries, during the years 1897 to 1926, which varied from 5.5 in 1918 to 23.1 in 1921.[4] Years of high unemployment were years of poor business, as 1897–1898, 1908, 1914–1915, 1921–1922, and 1924. The average for the whole thirty-year period in these same four industries was 10.2 per cent.[5] Although this estimate has been considered high by some, the mining and building industries have always experienced considerable seasonal employment, all of which is counted in the figures cited.

In times when business is good, joblessness does not carry with it the desolate outlook which accompanies depression unemployment. Prospects of a new job are good, and savings have proved adequate in many instances to carry a family until re-employed. Even so, the strain on financial resources of public and private charity has often been great. The recent depression has surpassed all previous records. In trying to alleviate the distress, responsibility has been accepted by the government for an important part in providing for those out of work. Since 1933, when the Federal government went into the business of relief on a large scale, the bulk of persons on relief has been aided by public agencies. Probably no comprehensive statistics are available regarding numbers helped under private auspices—churches, schools, missions, and other philanthropic organizations, as well as relatives, friends, and others. That these efforts in behalf of needy families must have been considerable seems obvious from our knowledge of private benevolences and from official relief figures of many cities, whose inadequacies point to the presence of other resources. A report of those helped by public agencies and the larger private agencies, whose figures are available, gives some idea of the unemployed who have had to be helped in shouldering their burdens.

[4] Paul H. Douglas and Aaron Director, *The Problem of Unemployment* (1931), p. 28.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Table 42 shows an increase in expenditures, with the continuation of the depression, from $71,000,000 in 1930 to $841,000,000 in 1935. These figures, moreover, do not include the expenses in-

Table 42

EXPENDITURES FOR DIRECT RELIEF FROM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDS, RURAL AND URBAN AREAS, 1929–1935 [a]

(In thousands of dollars)

| *Year* | *Grand Total* | *Public Funds* | | | *Private Funds* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Total* | *General* | *Special* [c] | |
| *Urban* [b] | | | | | |
| 1929 | 43,745 | 33,449 | 14,853 | 18,596 | 10,296 |
| 1930 | 71,425 | 54,754 | 33,510 | 21,244 | 16,671 |
| 1931 | 172,749 | 123,320 | 88,594 | 34,726 | 49,429 |
| 1932 | 308,185 | 251,104 | 208,694 | 42,410 | 57,081 |
| 1933 | 448,921 [d] | 421,032 | 379,722 | 41,310 | 27,889 |
| 1934 | 667,153 [d] | 652,467 | 608,880 | 43,587 | 14,686 |
| 1935 | 840,867 [e] | 829,224 | 770,256 | 58,968 | 11,643 |
| *Rural* [f] | | | | | |
| 1932 | 10,478 | 10,223 | 8,163 | 2,060 | 255 |
| 1933 | 22,984 | 22,688 | 20,737 | 1,951 | 296 |
| 1934 | 39,835 | 39,664 | 37,478 | 2,186 | 171 |
| 1935 | 45,796 | 45,608 | 41,693 | 3,915 [g] | 188 |

[a] Anne E. Geddes, *Trends in Relief Expenditures, 1910–1935* (1937), pp. 31, 41.
[b] Figures for 120 urban areas, p. 31.
[c] Aid to dependent children, aged, blind.
[d] Excludes expenditures under C.W.A.
[e] Excludes expenditures under W.P.A.
[f] Figures for 385 rural-town areas, p. 41.
[g] Includes an item of $279,000 for resettlement administration.

curred in providing work relief through the Civil Works Administration in 1934 and the Works Progress Administration subsequently.

Table 42 also shows that the bulk of the unemployed on relief rolls come from the cities. Rural workers and rural landowners apparently have suffered less from lack of work and from lack of income than their city brothers. In 1935, almost twenty times as much money was spent in urban as in rural areas. Obvious explanations spring to mind. Farms usually provide at least a bare subsistence. Demands are not so great for other necessities. In some regions, the standards of living are not so high, and the deprivation is thus proportionately lessened.

Persons in all walks of life have been unemployed. Many have been obliged to seek public aid who have never had such an experience previously. Despite the wide range of individuals haunted by the specter of unemployment, this experience comes most frequently to those at the bottom of the economic ladder. One study, covering 150,000 people in 51 cities, divided the unemployed into socioeconomic classes (see Table 43) according to the degree of skill involved in the occupations previously followed.[6]

Comparison of the percentages on relief revealed that the semiskilled and the unskilled have been most affected by the employment crisis. Other studies support the evidence previously cited that education and training represent a distinct economic asset, or, conversely, that lack of education and training represents a distinct handicap measured not only in potential earning power but in ability to secure employment. Thus, we see that those most affected by the crisis of unemployment are in the lower-income groups, whose reserves will not carry their families long and who require regularity of earnings for self-support.

Nor has unemployment been distributed equally between the sexes. It will be recalled that both Mrs. Morris and Mrs. Piala were able to secure jobs when their husbands, with superior skill and training, had lost theirs. Unemployment figures as well as

[6] Gladys L. Palmer and Katherine D. Wood, *Urban Workers on Relief* (1936), p. 37.

Table 43

SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS OF USUAL OCCUPATION OF UNEMPLOYED WORKERS IN THE URBAN-RELIEF SAMPLE, MAY, 1934, AND OF GAINFUL WORKERS IN THE CENSUS SAMPLING AREA, 1930, BY SEX [a]

| SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS | RELIEF SAMPLE 1934 | | | CENSUS SAMPLING AREA | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Total* | *Male* | *Female* | *Total* | *Male* | *Female* |
| Total Workers Reporting [b] | | | | | | |
| Number | 150,070 | 108,703 | 41,367 | 1,762,439 | 1,281,250 | 481,189 |
| Per Cent | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| White Collar | 18.1 | 16.8 | 21.6 | 40.6 | 37.1 | 49.9 |
| Skilled | 19.1 | 26.1 | 0.7 | 16.4 | 22.2 | 1.0 |
| Semiskilled | 29.5 | 28.2 | 32.8 | 22.7 | 21.2 | 26.8 |
| Unskilled | 33.3 | 28.9 | 44.9 | 20.3 | 19.5 | 22.3 |

[a] Gladys L. Palmer and Katherine D. Wood, *Urban Workers on Relief* (1936), Part I, p. 37 (Table 22).

[b] Includes 51 cities of 50,000 population or over, persons 16–64 years of age, and excludes those who had never worked.

relief figures show about five and one half times as many men as women unemployed in 1930, at a time when the gainful workers over ten years of age included barely three times as many men as women. (Compare figures given in Table 41.) This disproportionate number of unemployed men was reduced in the group totally unemployed in 1937 to a little more than two and a half men to every woman. Among workers on various government-sponsored projects, however, five times as many men as women were employed, so the difference is largely accounted for by these figures. It is the male then who has borne the brunt of the unemployment crisis.

The unemployment census of 1937 showed a wide age range among the unemployed. More than one fourth of those reporting were under the age of 25. Just less than a fourth were over 50. The remainder was scattered with a heavy concentration between

the ages of 25 and 35. Since this was a count of persons unemployed or on work-relief projects, the large numbers in the lower brackets represent young persons who might ordinarily be getting their start in business or industry. Table 44 gives the numbers in

Table 44

AGES OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS, 1937 [a]

| *Ages* | *No. of Persons* |
|---|---|
| 15–19 years | 1,103,353 |
| 20–24 years | 1,317,055 |
| 25–29 years | 866,801 |
| 30–34 years | 713,097 |
| 35–39 years | 713,956 |
| 40–44 years | 677,000 |
| 45–49 years | 660,266 |
| 50–54 years | 579,282 |
| 55–59 years | 487,536 |
| 60–64 years | 374,076 |
| 65–69 years | 212,769 |
| 70–74 years | 71,455 |
| Total | 7,776,646 |

[a] *Unemployment Census, 1937* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 2. Includes persons totally unemployed and emergency workers but not those partially employed.

each age classification. Evidently these young persons are parts of family groups, dependent on others, or in C.C.C. camps, because examination of relief recipients reveals an older age group. The universal practice of relief agencies is to deal with heads of families, if there is a family group, hence other unemployed members might not be counted separately. Miss Palmer and Miss Wood found among urban workers on relief rolls in 1934, in the cities which they studied, that the persons on relief were older than gainful workers in the general population of 1930. The median age for

men in their sample was 38.3 years and for women 33 years, as compared with an average of 36.4 years for men and 29.3 years for women in the previous census.[7]

*Family Relationships of the Unemployed.* Unfortunately, our figures are not as helpful as we might wish regarding the family status of the unemployed. In the first census of 1930, of the 2,429,062 persons reported unemployed, 1,017,913 were listed as heads of families. Almost as many, 961,228, were reported as related members, and the remainder were classified as lodgers.[8] This does not tell us anything about the related members. The heads, we may assume, usually were married men with wives and children dependent on them. Some of the related members may also have

Table 45

MARITAL STATUS OF PERSONS IN THE URBAN RELIEF SAMPLE MAY, 1934, AND THE URBAN POPULATION, 1930[a]

| *Marital Status* | *Relief Sample* | *Census* |
|---|---|---|
| Total Persons | | |
| Number | 451,399 | 51,079,222 |
| Per cent | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Single | 25.1 | 30.8 |
| Married (including separations) | 64.2 | 59.6 |
| Widowed | 9.1 | 8.2 |
| Divorced | 1.6 | 1.4 |

[a] Gladys L. Palmer and Katherine D. Wood, *Urban Workers on Relief* (1936), Part I, p. 11.

been married, for we know there was much doubling up of families during the depression. A survey of urban relief cases shows (Table 45) that 64 per cent of the urban workers on relief were married,

[7] Gladys L. Palmer and Katherine D. Wood, *Urban Workers on Relief* (1936), p. 26.

[8] *Census of Unemployment, 1930* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 14.

although they may not all have been living with their spouses at the time of the study. This represents five per cent more married persons on relief than in the general population. Although the depression and unemployment have undoubtedly brought much suffering to many single persons, the findings of this study showed them less affected than married persons. Many single and unattached individuals, however, were cared for in shelters or by transiency programs and might not have been included in this sample. The problems of the unattached individual do not influence the lives of as many other persons, nor as acutely, as when the head of a household is out of work and cannot provide for his family.

That unemployment long sustained often has a devastating effect on family life cannot be denied, although the extent of these unhealthy and demoralizing effects is disputed. The whole disorganizing process starts with the psychological impact on the unemployed individual himself. Gradually his reactions are reflected in the attitudes of those about him. A number of studies, individually small but jointly very revealing, have sought to examine the direction and extent of certain influences of unemployment on family life.

One early project, impressionistic and subjective though it was, brought into sharp focus some of the factors which prey upon the unemployed person. These were noted by hundreds of social workers and public-health nurses during the first winter of the depression, 1930–1931. "The adverse consequences," says the report, "make a long and sinister catalogue." [9] The factors listed include the following:

Discouragement, depression, desperation
Bewilderment and mental confusion
Loss of confidence, development of a sense of failure

[9] Lilian Brandt, *An Impressionistic View of the Winter of 1930–31 in New York City* (1932), pp. 16–17. By permission of the Welfare Council of New York City.

Loss of initiative, indifference, apathy
Bitterness, moral and spiritual deterioration
Cynicism, resentment, antagonism, rebellion—against the wealthy, against society, against the government, against things in general.
Loss of pride and self-respect, sensitiveness, avoidance of social contacts
Restlessness, craving for excitement and distraction, leading to drinking and gambling
Mental and nervous disturbances, from irritability and excessive worry
Contented acceptance of lower standards and dependence on charity
Constant fear, even when again employed, and a sense of insecurity

The first move of a family when unemployment strikes is to marshal the available resources and inaugurate a strict economy program. Retrenchment is made on all sides. Savings are budgeted. As time goes on, insurance is cashed or allowed to lapse; cars, homes, radio, even furniture may be sold, usually at a great sacrifice. Many homes have been lost through failure to keep up payments. Various members, including the father, keep up a search for jobs which do not materialize. Morale vanishes, health is frequently impaired through insufficient diet. As the family continues in its attempts to meet the major crisis facing it, new alignments may be set up. We saw in the Morris family that the father finally gave up the role of breadwinner to his wife, though she could not earn enough to support them all. Similarly Mr. Piala had to resign his position as wage earner to his wife who could find work when he could not. Even if positions in the household are not changed to the point of reversal, a modification of roles, as when the father must accept an auxiliary wage earner, is often necessitated. All this reorganization to preserve the family and to combat the forces beating against it may serve to strengthen the family, as the Pialas were strengthened, with each member co-operating for the family good. On the other hand, disorganizing factors may be set in motion, as with the Morrises, ending inevitably in a shattering of the family as a functioning unit. Home atmosphere becomes unhappy,

wives nag husbands for not getting work, children complain because they do not have what other children have. The home is no longer a man's castle, but his torture chamber or prison. Broken homes result.

The character and extent of the disintegration depend on the strength and integration of a family prior to the advent of unemployment and its accompanying destructive forces. In order to get some insight into the baffling reasons why some families withstood adversity better than others, Professor Angell studied 50 families all in good economic circumstances prior to the depression, but to whom it brought a loss in income of 25 per cent or more.[10] Not all of these were unemployed, although many received much less income or were forced, in middle age, to try and take up some new line of work. Stated in somewhat oversimplified terms, his conclusions were that the more highly integrated and more highly adaptable the family and its members the less vulnerable they were to enforced changes incident to decrease in income caused by the depression. He examined particularly the family-reaction pattern to adversity, whether it involved a maintenance of similar roles in the family, a modification of roles, or a change of roles. Families which could withstand reduced income, so long as individual status and roles were unaltered, proved more vulnerable to modifications of position and quite vulnerable to thoroughgoing changes in member roles and status. Adaptability was more important than integration in adjusting to changed positions in the family group. Families which yielded to the pressures changed in type, and the disorganizing processes set to work.[11]

Angell's conclusions, tentatively put forth, were reinforced by a later study of 100 Chicago families known to the Illinois Institute of Juvenile Research.[12] Families were selected for study

[10] Robert Cooley Angell, *The Family Encounters the Depression* (1936).

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 258–64.

[12] Ruth S. Cavan and Katherine H. Ranck, *The Family and the Depression* (1938).

whose patterns, both strengths and weaknesses, were known prior to the depression. Few were known to relief agencies at that time. All material regarding the families before depression set in was acquired from information carefully recorded before 1929. The effects of the depression were determined by personal visits to the homes. The effect of loss of employment or decreased income on the family, disorganization or organization produced, and adjustments of members were examined. Through this study, Mrs. Cavan and Miss Ranck arrived at a belief that the impact of the depression and unemployment of the normal breadwinner depended upon the family's organization prior to the crisis.[13] According to certain criteria, families were classified as "well organized" or "disorganized" prior to the depression. The former showed marked ability to withstand misfortune with less permanent damage than the latter. There was considerable anxiety, particularly in accepting relief, and individual members suffered temporary demoralization. Nevertheless, they could effect adjustments, and the family unit was maintained. Families disorganized prior to the depression were more seriously affected. Nervous breakdowns occurred, disintegrative forces developed, the family evaded issues. A variant was found in some few families in which the relief agency had succeeded in helping to form better organizational patterns.[14]

Vogt, to whom we are indebted for the story of the Morris family, made an intensive study of 25 families whose principal wage earner was unemployed and which were recipients of relief. He identified a characteristic sequence of events in the experience of these families.

1. Father loses job and role as provider, looks for work, becomes apprehensive and anxious.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 197–8.
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 146–9.

2. Mother's responsibility increases and role enhanced; tasks at home heavier; may also become breadwinner.

3. Children become insecure and restless.

4. First few months usually indicate a more highly integrated family life; father and mother draw closer together, children co-operating.

5. Strain increased as resources diminished; father's continuous failure to find steady work makes him anxious; increased irritability and quarreling.

6. Mother and older children try to find work.

7. Resources exhausted; applied for relief; initiative usually taken by mother.

8. Lessening of tension with first going on relief.

9. Mother becomes increasingly important, father continues to lose ground.

10. Characterized by a variety of aspects of disorganization: marital relations strained, quarreling increased, control more difficult, children may leave home, father drinks, spends less time at home, or deserts.[15]

Vogt concludes, from his rather limited study, that family life is seriously disturbed by prolonged unemployment. It must be borne in mind that he studied families on the relief rolls of an agency, who had been subject to unemployment in most instances for some time.

There seems to be little question but that unemployment sufficiently prolonged to exhaust the resources of the family and force indefinite economic dependence has a disorganizing effect on family life. Roles and relationships within the family are vitally and adversely influenced. In the majority of families indications point toward complete and permanent disruption in these relationships. Other families seem to suffer less only because the status of individual members is protected in various ways from the more harsh aspects of unemployment and their accustomed roles are not drastically modified or completely eliminated.[16]

[15] Vogt, *op. cit.*, pp. 57–60.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

On the other hand, Rundquist and Sletto, in their attempt to get at personality changes during the depression, drawing their conclusions from answers to series of tests given to large numbers of persons, stated:

> There is no evidence that family attitudes have suffered among either the youthful unemployed or the men on relief. Evidence . . . indicated that family tensions in families of the youthful unemployed were accentuated by unemployment when the normal family equilibrium had already been disturbed by such factors as death or unemployment of a parent. Approximately half of the unemployed men on relief agree that "one becomes nervous at home," but the sense of obligation to and identification with the primary group seems to be greater than among the employed. This is reasonable in that the unemployed probably find their greatest personal satisfaction in experiences in the primary groups, where being unemployed does not exclude participation.[17]

With conflicting evidence, it is difficult to know just what does happen to family relationships. We have reason to believe that there have been a number of desertions, that a lot of young boys have left their homes and taken to the road, and that wives have become exceptionally nagging; but the extent is not known. More studies are needed, measuring one aspect at a time. One wonders about the effects of unemployment on family men as against single men. What per cent of desertions have been found in specific cases which can be traced to the depression? What has been the effect of unemployment and relief policies on marriage? On the birth rate? Needed also is more extensive inquiry into the roles of the family's members and the continuing relations with the kinship group. One solution of many families has been moving in together. Families have notoriously given and loaned money to relatives while they had it. What effect has this had upon the relationship of the members of the group? Most of the problems raised here,

[17] Edward A. Rundquist and Raymond F. Sletto, *Personality in the Depression* (1936), p. 367. By permission of the University of Minnesota Press.

and others, are suggested by the Whites in their discussion of the social aspects of relief policies in the depression.[18]

*Employment Opportunities for the Unemployed.* Even in good times, it is easier to go from one job to another than from unemployment to employment. Obviously in a depression jobs are scarce, and the longer a person is out of work the harder it is to secure a position. Over an extended period, he loses contacts, skills, and confidence. If jobs are lost after long employment in one specific position, the problem is apt to be intensified. If many are displaced, and if they do not soon find something else, they may never again secure work requiring the same degree of skill. Thus, the skilled artisan may become a semiskilled worker, the semiskilled, unskilled, and so on. This problem of re-employment after dismissal, discharge, or layoff was troublesome even before the depression, with its wholesale projecting of workers onto the labor market. Many studies have been made of workers laid off and their efforts to get employment. Here will be discussed only two studies which show the difficulties encountered in getting re-employment after a prolonged layoff.

The first represents predepression times, after the shutdown of the L. Candee Rubber factories in New Haven and Hartford, Connecticut, in the spring and summer of 1929 respectively.[19] After a year, the dismissed employees were traced and their experiences followed.

Table 46 gives the length of time necessary for the New Haven workers to find employment and the number who did not find any within the time limits of the survey. Elsewhere in the book, how the families managed, and the wages received before and after the period of unemployment are reported. All of these items are important, but our concern here is with the chances available for the

[18] R. Clyde White and Mary K. White, *Research Memorandum on Social Aspects of Relief Policies in the Depression* (1937), pp. 19–37, Chapter III, "Social Effects Upon the Family."

[19] Ewan Clague and Walter J. Couper, *After the Shutdown* (1934), Part I.

Table 46

## LENGTH OF TIME NECESSARY TO FIND WORK

Total number of workers seeking work and number finding first permanent job within a period of approximately two months, classified by age groups [a]

NEW HAVEN

| AGE GROUPS | MEN | | WOMEN | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Total Number Seeking Work* | *Number Finding First Job in 0, 1, or 2 Months* [b] | *Total Number Seeking Work* | *Number Finding First Job in 0, 1, or 2 Months* [b] |
| Total | 228 | 140 | 358 | 231 |
| 15–19 | 23 | 17 | 77 | 58 |
| 20–24 | 18 | 10 | 75 | 54 |
| 25–29 | 26 | 17 | 72 | 47 |
| 30–34 | 28 | 19 | 33 | 24 |
| 35–39 | 23 | 15 | 35 | 14 |
| 40–44 | 32 | 29 | 30 | 18 |
| 45–49 | 30 | 15 | 17 | 8 |
| 50–54 | 19 | 11 | 10 | 5 |
| 55–59 | 15 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| 60–64 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 65–69 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pensions | 7 | 0 | 7 | 2 |

[a] Ewan Clague and Walter J. Couper, *After the Shutdown* (1934), p. 22. By permission of the Yale University Institute of Human Relations.

[b] In classifying the time out of work, 0 means two weeks or less, 1 means from half a month to a month and a half, 2 months equals from one and one half to two and one half months, etc. This method of tabulation was used because of the tendency of the workers to reply in round numbers; it is a more satisfactory classification than the method of breaking the class groups at exactly one month, two months, and so on.

unemployed to re-establish themselves in the world of industry. In studying other handicaps, we have examined opportunities offered in the work group, and we are interested similarly in the facts with respect to the unemployed. As may be seen from Table 46, approximately the same percentage of men and women succeeded in finding new employment after the plant closed, that is, 61 and 65 per cent respectively. Almost two thirds, then, of the total number were able to get some sort of job. The factor of age proved most significant, again reinforcing a statement in Chapter 4 that the older worker is handicapped in so far as job opportunities are concerned.

But those persons employed were not as favorably fixed as they had been. Evidence concerning length of time their jobs were held, together with earnings received, shows that many of the jobs were not held even to the close of the survey period and that wages were considerably less than the workers had earned previously. A few sentences from the authors' summary make this clear:

> In New Haven also the first placement was not always permanent, only 46 per cent of those finding work being still in possession of their first job at the close of the survey. Of the others who became unemployed again about one-fifth lost out immediately and considerably more than half were out of work within about two months. There were cases of workers holding as many as six to nine jobs during the period following the shutdown.
>
> . . . For the entire group who looked for work at all the average time lost by New Haven workers amounted to approximately 40 per cent of the available working time over a period of eleven months. . . .
>
> The vast majority of both men and women suffered sharp cuts in earnings as a result of the change in jobs. . . . On the other hand, over 27 per cent of the New Haven men and women did find new jobs paying as high wages as the old. . . .
>
> The average weekly earnings of the New Haven men on the best-paid job they were able to obtain after the shutdown barely exceeded 80 per cent of the rubber company rates; the women's losses were even

greater, the best-paid job averaging only 76 per cent of the earnings on the old one. . . .

For New Haven a special computation was made of the net effect of unemployment and loss in weekly earnings. The figures show that the total loss in income of the workers in a period of about one year after the shutdown amounted to about 50 per cent of their income during the preceding year with the rubber company.[20]

The depression made the problem of securing a job the harder since so many more were out of work and competition tremendously increased. In Minnesota, in 1933, the Employment Stabilization Research Institute undertook to follow up a sample of 500 individuals out of 2,100 who had been examined at the two Occupational Analysis Clinics during the preceding year. These 2,100 had had what the Institute termed "consistent occupational histories" previous to their unemployment during the depression. In other words, they represent a relatively stable group who would presumably make good employees. They were not the habitually casual or shiftless type. Nevertheless, Miss Bloodworth found that only 39.4 per cent had had continuous employment which lasted as long as one month. Of those who had secured some work, only 22 per cent were still employed when last interviewed.[21]

The length of time elapsing before employment was secured was also examined, and the results, as shown in Table 47, indicate that employment was more likely if the period of unemployment was short. Conversely, the longer a person is unemployed the less likely seem his chances of obtaining work.

As with the New Haven study, an age differential was apparent. The author states: "The younger group was considerably more fortunate in finding employment than the group aged forty-five and over—41 per cent as compared with 33 per cent. This differ-

[20] Clague and Couper, *op. cit.*, pp. 74–6. By permission of the Yale University Institute of Human Relations.

[21] Jessie Bloodworth, *Social Consequences of Prolonged Unemployment* (1933), p. 6.

Table 47

LENGTH OF UNEMPLOYMENT AS SHOWN IN STUDY BY EMPLOYMENT STABILIZATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE [a]

| *Length of Unemployment* | *Persons Securing Employment* | | *Persons Not Securing Employment* | | *Total Group* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *No.* | *Per Cent* | *No.* | *Per Cent* | *No.* | *Per Cent* |
| Under one year | 94 | 52.8 | 12 | 4.2 | 106 | 22.9 |
| One to two years | 51 | 28.7 | 97 | 34.1 | 148 | 32.0 |
| Two years and over | 33 | 18.5 | 175 | 61.6 | 208 | 45.0 |
| Total | 178 | 100.0 | 284 | 99.9 | 462 | 99.9 |

[a] Jessie Bloodworth, *Social Consequences of Prolonged Unemployment* (1933), p. 6. By permission of the University of Minnesota Press.

ence would be more pronounced had not some of the older skilled workers who held little more than makeshift jobs been counted as employed." [22]

Observation of the continued presence of large numbers on relief rolls and W.P.A. projects and the unsettled conditions of some industries, supplemented by careful studies such as these two, forces the unpleasant conclusion that prolonged unemployment is a definite handicap to re-employment in industry. Disuse of skills lowers their quality, disheartens the worker. Critics maintain that treatment of relief recipients during the depression has tended to pauperize them by its insistence on complete destitution before relief is granted. Moreover, relief grants are usually insufficient to enable the workers to maintain their physical strength. Thus, for various reasons, the unemployed tend to become unemployable.

[22] Bloodworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–7. By permission of the University of Minnesota Press.

*Health of the Unemployed.* There is still another type of handicap that frequently accompanies or follows unemployment. It is the handicap of broken health. Undoubtedly physical resistance and stamina have been greatly undermined during the recent depression. Many families suffered great deprivation before asking for aid, and, in some cases, the relief has not been adequate for healthful living. The National Health Survey of 1935–1936 showed a large amount of incapacitating illness among families on relief. Of 2,308,588 persons in 81 cities on whom information was secured, the frequency of disabling illness per 1,000 persons during a twelvemonth period was 234 for relief families as compared with a rate of 172 for families of all income levels. The proportion of family heads reported as chronically disabled among the 654,811 families was 5.2 for those on relief compared with 1.3 in the non-relief families.[23]

In addition to actual illness, many cases of malnutrition have occurred. Because of dietary deficiencies, and for other reasons, teeth have deteriorated. All these have seriously affected the wage earners' general strength, have affected pregnant mothers, and have had various effects on children which are likely to show up later. Williams, in discussing the social effects of unemployment, cites an increase in malnutrition among children in one health center in New York from 18 per cent in 1928 to 60 per cent in 1931. Among Pennsylvania school children, there was an increase from 18 per cent in 1929–1930 to 27 per cent in 1931–1932.[24] In a study of 259 families in five cities, the United States Children's Bureau found in 61 per cent of the cases a lack of sufficient vegetables for a proper diet. Twenty per cent were totally lacking any green vegetables. Forty-nine per cent of all families had less than

[23] *National Health Survey, 1935–1936* (U. S. Public Health Service Bulletin No. 2 [1938]), pp. 2–3.

[24] James M. Williams, *Human Aspects of Unemployment and Relief* (1933), pp. 54–5.

one quart of milk a day, and the showing would have been even less favorable had not one city been very conscious of milk need. Nine per cent of all families had no milk. Two thirds of the families reported illness of one or more members of the family during the last six months. In 50 instances, the father had been ill, in 80 cases, the mother, and in 114 instances, the children. The study was made in the fall of the year, so that the six months for which data were gathered did not include winter when illness is always more common and more acute.[25]

Because of efforts to economize and also because of restrictions forced by charitable organizations, the physical condition of the unemployed has been further undermined by forced moving to undesirable sections of the city to save rent, and by doubling up, so that quarters are crowded and sleeping arrangements cramped. In previous chapters, we have seen that the incidence of certain diseases—e. g., tuberculosis and cardiac ailments, particularly of children—is higher in the poorer sections of the city. The exposure rate to such conditions has thus been increased. This together with insufficient diet and unsanitary quarters has tended to decrease resistance to disease.

*Friends, Attitudes, Interest Groups.* The impact of the depression affects individuals somewhat as families. That is, it proves more disastrous to those who are not themselves sufficiently integrated to combat the destructive forces. Poverty itself does impose certain limitations on even the most stable personalities. One must cut down commercial amusements and club memberships, many of which are a measure of one's standing in the community; hence the forced retrenchment means a blow to one's prestige and status. Perhaps one of the last contacts to be withdrawn is the church, which may be given up finally because of inability to contribute or to have proper clothes. The studies of Angell and Mrs. Cavan and

[25] Katherine F. Lenroot, "Children of the Depression: A Study of 259 Families in Selected Areas of Five Cities," *Social Service Review*, 9 (1935), 212–42.

Miss Ranck, as well as the records of all relief agencies, indicate that social contacts are relinquished by many families. The attitude of inferiority seems to be more intensified among the children. As with Betty Morris, they wish to stay home from school and Sunday school because they feel embarrassed at their personal appearance. Or where clothing of like cut and pattern is distributed by relief agencies, the distress is the more acute, because others may recognize their "city" clothes (clothes dispensed by the city). One poor father was quite in tears because his son, having been chosen valedictorian of his high-school class, did not want to assume the honor, since he knew everyone there would recognize his "city" pants.

In their efforts to make some adjustment to the conditions imposed by the depression, many persons have left home. These are more apt to be fathers discouraged by inability to find work, loss of respect of children, and continued nagging from wife or children. Such a solution was reached by both Mr. Morris and his son John. Mr. Morris did not take to the road as John did, but many unattached men have turned up in transient camps, in men's shelters. Their plight is discussed in the next chapter. Literature and the cinema have both capitalized the human interest aroused by the increase of young persons on the road during the depression, an increase which, although real, was laid, perhaps to an exaggerated degree, at the door of unemployment. One such account describes the situation thus:

> By the very nature of the count we cannot know how many boys and girls (for there are girls) are on the go. In order to be correct, a census would have to be taken at every point on the highway at the same hour. Samplings can only indicate the great size of the migratory army. In Kansas City, in May of 1932, railroad men stated that by conservative estimate fifteen hundred men and boys rode the freights on every day. Pennsylvania estimated in 1933 that an aggregate of 628,000 men and boys wander about the state in the course of a year,

and that 25 per cent of them are under twenty-four years of age. The chief special agent of the Southern Pacific Railroad supplied figures to a Senate committee demonstrating that the number of trespassers ejected from their trains and property had grown from 79,215 in 1929 to 683,457 in 1932, and that in 1932 about 75 per cent of them were under twenty-five years of age. At El Paso, Texas, during April and May, the Salvation Army fed and lodged 9,551 men and boys, of whom 2,059 were under twenty-one.[26]

With some of the older children, the necessity of postponing marriage has been discussed as one of the frequent problems of that age group. The number of illegitimate births did increase during the early 1930's, but how much of this was due to illicit sex relations because young people felt they could not marry without a job it is difficult to say. On the other hand, some married earlier than they would have done ordinarily, because of their eagerness to get out of the parental home. Mrs. Cavan and Miss Ranck sum up as follows the results of their investigation of young persons in the adolescent period:

> This rather fragmentary survey of the situation of young men and women re-emphasizes the point already made in this study, that what happens to people during such a crisis as the depression is not the result solely of the crisis and its attendant disorganization but is also the result of preceding personal habits and attitudes. Thus, the only boys whose restlessness forced them into the ranks of the transients were boys who were already unhappy at home; the unhappy marriages tended to rest upon earlier maladjustments rather than primarily upon unemployment. *Nevertheless, however the young people reacted, it seems true that unemployment or very low wages created a period of dissatisfaction, restlessness, or resentment.*[27]

Where escape mechanisms are not resorted to, retrenchment and reorganization are the order of the day. Recreation is among the

[26] Clinch Calkins, *Youth Never Comes Again* (1933), p. 11. By permission of the author.

[27] Cavan and Ranck, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–8. By permission of The University of Chicago Press. Italics ours.

first sacrifices made in the interest of economy. Many of the families interviewed in various studies of unemployment brought out this fact, some stating they had not been to the moving pictures for years. Those who did go went infrequently. Many men dropped out of their union. Contributions to church and clubs declined. Membership, measured by dues paid in recreational centers of the Y.W.C.A., Y.M.C.A., and Boy Scouts, suffered during the depression. Bakké in his study of the English workingman has thus expressed the feelings of the men toward their membership in organizations:

> One of the most telling effects of unemployment is upon the group life of the individuals concerned. The worker in common with the other members of the community finds clubs and lodges to be one desirable alternative in the spending of his leisure time. . . . Unemployment with its inevitable curtailing of the means of support has a tendency, according to the testimony of the unemployed, to decrease the activities of men in their groups, particularly where there is a financial obligation. Even where financial obligations are overlooked by the club for the period of unemployment, the fact of not being able to pay one's way causes such associations to be regarded as less desirable.[28]

Even informal entertainment—mingling with neighbors, entertaining friends and families—has been cut down because of a desire to serve refreshments and inability to do this on a relief allotment. Thus families frequently imposed a social isolation on themselves because of their inadequate income and their pride. Many families have reduced the amount of household furnishings, or their quarters were in inferior, low-rent portions of the city whither they had moved from former neighborhoods. Here they felt they could not continue old ties, and they were reluctant to make new ones.

Unfortunately, we have no way of measuring exactly the shift

[28] E. Wight Bakké, *The Unemployed Man* (1934), pp. 195–6. By permission of E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc.

which has taken place in interest groups, and cannot compare the number of organizations to which persons belonged before and during the depression. But we know that some change occurred. All the slack has not been taken up, for we are continually reminded of idle youth by groups hanging around corners, in taverns, and elsewhere. How much of this is due to choice, how much to force of circumstance, can scarcely be estimated.

One limited study which attempted to measure "differential effects of the depression" has sought to get an expression from the families interviewed as to extent and nature of their recreational activities prior to and since 1929. The investigator took statements from three types of people: businessmen, laborers, and farmers—150 families altogether. All families were found to have curtailed expenditures for necessary items of the family budget, and all had indicated smaller amounts spent for recreation. This is not a surprising conclusion. But another fact revealed in the writer's figures was that farmers' and laborers' families found new or substitute activities in the community, while businessmen and their families seemed to develop new uses of leisure at home. Some of the facts are given in Table 48. One other indication of the development of new or substitute activities is found in figures of the National Recreation Association. These show that total yearly attendance at playgrounds rose from 159,000,000 in 1929 to over 235,000,000 in 1932, and that among young adults the increase for those same years was from 22,841,000 to 34,429,000.[29]

*Programs of Treatment.* The effects of widespread unemployment cannot be disposed of in so brief a chapter. To combat the many disintegrating and converging forces described in this chapter, state and Federal agencies have, through trial and error, instituted many programs. These have been designed rather to alleviate what was deemed an emergency situation than as part of a long-range plan aimed at decreasing the disadvantages under

[29] National Recreation Association, *Recreation and Unemployment* (1933), p. 7.

Table 48

PARTICIPATION IN RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE DEPRESSION COMPARED WITH PREDEPRESSION ACTIVITIES, 150 IOWA FAMILIES [a]

| ACTIVITIES AND UTILITIES | TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES [b] | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Laborers* | *Farmers* | *Businessmen* |
| | 53 | 56 | 41 |
| Recreation: | | | |
| Motion pictures | −16 | − 7 | −21 |
| Ownership of car | −16 | − 1 | − 1 |
| Travel or trips | −19 | −16 | −27 |
| Kittenball | +27 | +22 | + 8 |
| Home recreation | 0 | 0 | + 9 |
| Education: | | | |
| High school | − 1 | − 1 | 0 |
| College or vocational school | − 3 | − 4 | − 5 |
| Adult education [c] | 0 | 0 | 0 |

[a] Laetitia M. Conard, "Differential Depression Effects on Families of Laborers, Farmers, and the Business Class," *American Journal of Sociology,* 44 (1939), 528. By permission of The University of Chicago Press.

[b] Number of each group suffering loss (minus sign) or gain (plus sign).

[c] Participated in by many wives of laborers.

which unemployed persons labor. Giving financial aid was the chief measure by which attempts were made to keep families alive until a job could be secured. But jobs were not secured, so programs of work relief were instituted, getting fully under way with the Works Progress Administration in 1935. The main objective of this plan seems sound, namely, to allow the recipient to work for his money. By being busy and receiving a wage instead of a dole, the beneficiary's morale was supposed to be maintained. To a cer-

tain extent, these ends seem to have been achieved, but not as fully as had been hoped. Frequently W.P.A. wages have not been comparable with those in private employment. Men have been put at unfamiliar types of work. They have had no assurance of regular employment. The more fortunate members of the community have ridiculed and otherwise stigmatized those on work relief. Other criticisms of W.P.A. involve charges of inefficiency, graft, and ill-conceived projects. Nevertheless, it appears that work relief has produced many useful public works and has contributed materially to the morale of its recipients.

The Federal government has also sponsored many special programs for transients, for rural rehabilitation, for drought relief, for resettlement of farm folk, for public works, Civilian Conservation Corps, better housing, and home ownership.[30] More recently, the Social Security Act of 1935, with its various provisions for health and welfare of various categories of citizens, has been hailed as an important achievement. Some of the specific provisions are discussed elsewhere in this book.[31]

Some of these provisions are not new. Periodically, when mass unemployment has been dramatized in times of business depressions, plans have been offered to guard against future recurrence. But little has actually been done. The plans most favorably received have been aimed at stabilization of industry and unemployment insurance. Many industries have tried to work out plans whereby they could provide work for a certain number of weeks per year, as the Proctor and Gamble Company, makers of Ivory Soap, and the Hills Brothers, who process Dromedary Dates; or provide a fund to tide employees over periods of enforced layoffs, as the Dennison Company, manufacturers of crepe paper and its

[30] For fuller information regarding these programs, see United States government publications. They are summarized by Dorothy Kahn, *Unemployment and Its Treatment in the United States* (1937).

[31] For a fuller discussion, see Paul H. Douglas, *Social Security in the United States* (1936).

products, and Leeds and Northrup, electrical-instrument concern. But industry alone seems to have been unable to carry the burden. Hence, unemployment compensation was made a part of the Social Security Act. Contributions from employers are collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenue through a payroll tax for all persons in certain occupations. Supplemented by government funds, this money will be dispensed under approved state plans, when unemployment occurs. Occupational groups still exempted are agricultural and domestic workers, various Federal and state employees, and those employed by nonprofit-making organizations. The objective of this scheme is to tide wage earners over limited periods of unemployment. It has not yet proven feasible to insure against prolonged periods of unemployment.[32]

Establishment of an effective public-works program is under way, although just how much it may help iron out fluctuations in the business cycle is difficult to say. Another attempt also sponsored by the Federal government is the establishment of public employment offices. They are designed to replace the "rackets" of many fee-charging agencies, and to help bring about a better organization of the labor market. Organized under Federal regulations, they are gradually gaining the confidence of the employer class. As yet, the numbers applying for work are far greater than the number of calls for workers.

Since the beginning of the depression of 1929, there has been a growing recognition on the part of recreational agencies and governmental bodies that satisfactory facilities should be provided for utilizing the enforced leisure of the unemployed. As a result of this recognition, opportunities have been offered to the unemployed to participate in social groups for pleasure, general education, and vocational training, at no expense to themselves. New

[32] For fuller information regarding unemployment-compensation provisions, see Bryce M. Stewart, *Planning and Administration of Unemployment Compensation in the United States* (1938).

outlets for surplus energy and new stimuli for drooping spirits were made available, and, for some, opportunities for leadership. The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration have proved their usefulness in helping many young people who might otherwise have been deprived of the educational opportunities thus afforded. To evaluate their influence, however, studies which deal specifically with membership in these and other groups at various times during the depression are needed, as well as a closer examination of the interests of those who still hang idly about the streets.

The problems of unemployment represent a configuration of issues. In the same personal and family situation may be found destitution, disease, conflict, and delinquency. But, of them all, we have chosen to emphasize changes in group participation. Through unemployment, family relationships may be distorted and group contacts limited. But a realization of some needs has grown sufficiently great to motivate measures designed to counteract disintegration and mobilize forces favoring greater social participation on the part of the unemployed.

## Suggested Readings

Angell, Robert Cooley, *The Family Encounters the Depression.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936. Examination of the effect of substantial loss of income of 50 families with children in the University of Michigan.

Bloodworth, Jessie A., *Social Consequences of Prolonged Unemployment.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1933. Studies of individual histories of 500 unemployed men known to occupational-analysis clinics conducted by the Stabilization Research Institute of the University of Minnesota.

Cavan, Ruth S., and Ranck, Katherine H., *The Family and the Depression.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938. How 100 families met unemployment and effects of the depression.

Clague, Ewan, and Powell, Webster, *Ten Thousand Out of Work.*

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1933. Characteristics of 10,000 unemployed in Philadelphia, and their problems.

Douglas, Paul H., and Director, Aaron, *The Problem of Unemployment.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931. First comprehensive study of extent and costs of unemployment and evaluation of unemployment-insurance experiments.

Douglas, Paul H., *Social Security in the United States.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1936. Examination of background, philosophy, and provisions of the Federal Social Security Act.

Kahn, Dorothy, *Unemployment and Its Treatment in the United States.* New York: American Association of Social Workers, 1937. Brief summary of specific Federal and local programs inaugurated to combat unemployment.

Palmer, Gladys, and Wood, Katherine, *Urban Workers on Relief.* Washington: Works Progress Administration, 1935, Research Monograph IX, Part I. Careful and painstaking analysis of social, economic, and occupational characteristics of persons on relief rolls in selected areas.

Williams, James Mickel, *Human Aspects of Unemployment and Relief.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1933. Subjective but telling account of the meaning of the depression to people affected, with special reference to the effect on children.

## Projects for Further Study

1. From the state department administering unemployment compensation, secure data as to the number of persons "insured," the number who have claimed and who have received compensation, periods over which compensation has been paid to individuals, and amounts paid out. Secure a copy of the state law.

2. From local, state, and Federal employment agencies, secure data as to the number of persons registered at various times, their occupations, and ages. How many have been placed? How frequently has this involved change of occupation? Of residence?

3. If there is a local organization of unemployed (e. g., Workers' Alliance of America), interview some of its members. Try to distinguish the reporting of objective facts from subjective attitudes and opin-

ions. Ask what has been their observation and their experience as to membership and activity in social groups, recreation, reading, adult education, family relations, and other interests of the unemployed.

4. If personally acquainted with some family whose principal breadwinner has been unemployed for an extended period, write the story of its changed fortunes, noting especially social participation within and without the family group. Be especially careful not to exaggerate social participation *before* the period of unemployment. Compare the results with those of Angell, *The Family Encounters the Depression.*

5. Give Chapin's "Social Participation Scale" to some employed and some unemployed persons of the same occupations. Score, tabulate, and compare averages.

6. Since attitudes are intimately related to social participation, instructors interested in attitude tests may well use the "Minnesota Scale for the Survey of Opinions" (E. A. Rundquist and R. F. Sletto, *Personality in the Depression*). However, this should not be done without careful reading of the book by Rundquist and Sletto.

7. In the vicinity of the college (or the students' homes), is unemployment chiefly cyclical, seasonal, or residual? Are the unemployed workers chiefly settled or migratory? Native white, foreign born, or Negro? Married or single? Young, middle aged, or older? Answers to these questions will necessarily be impressionistic and of doubtful validity, unless statistical data have been assembled by some competent person or agency.

8. Secure data as to trends in industrial employment from your state department of labor as well as from the U. S. Department of Labor. This may be done for the past year or for longer periods. Statistics are regularly reported. Consult the *Monthly Labor Review.*

9. Interview local Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., settlements, or other organizations as to trends in club membership before and during the depression. What was the reason for any changes? Ascertain from these sources or from councils of social agencies or local relief administrators any provision for recreation needs of the unemployed, extent of participation, and the like.

10. Interview union leaders as to changes in membership due to unemployment, provisions for carrying members, amount of unemployment among union men. Try to get factual information, not mere impressions.

# *Chapter 14*

# MOBILITY: THE TRANSIENT

FOR centuries there have been in western Europe and North America considerable numbers of persons without homes or away from their homes. In times of social upheaval—war, epidemic, depression, colonization—the numbers have been very great; during periods of relative stability, they have apparently been fewer. But at all times, these transient folk have been regarded with suspicion, annoyance, and open hostility. In their wanderings, they have seen many regions and many people, but they have had little part in neighborhood and community life. Commonly they have also been detached from family, church, industry, and other social groups and institutions. Often they have performed useful functions as pioneers, unskilled laborers, peddlers, and entertainers. But nearly always there have stood between these wanderers and the settled population social barriers. Their very willingness and freedom to roam meant that they were somehow different from established householders. Their short sojourns meant that they could take little part in the affairs of local groups. The fear, jealousy, and antagonism of settled folk caused the transients to be labeled rogues, vagabonds, tramps, hobos, and, more recently, gasoline gypsies. Since 1929 there has apparently been a great increase in the number of homeless and migratory persons in the United States. Hence, without ignoring the wanderers of earlier times, we shall pay special attention to the newer transients.

**David Krause and His Family** [1]

This is the story of a family of twelve, the descendants of Russian immigrants. Mr. Krause himself was born in an agricultural village in south Russia forty-six years before this account was written. His uncle had come to America and settled on a farm in North Dakota. Needing cheap help, he sent for three of his nephews. One of these was David Krause, who was thirteen at the time. For eight years, he served a kind of indenture to his uncle. During this period, he attended school for two winter terms and reached the third grade. Meanwhile David's father had come to this country and filed on a homestead in North Dakota. For a time, David helped his father. A little later, he married a neighbor girl of background similar to his own, and settled on a near-by farm. Twenty years later, we find them in California.

Of eleven children, ten remain in the household. Sonya, aged twenty-two, tells of having had no regular group of friends. "Moving all the time you just play around with the guys you meet working." Her favorite pastime is "making dates with guys" to go to public dances. Paul, the oldest son, managed to reach the seventh grade, despite miles of walking through deep Dakota snows. He is an unskilled laborer, eager to marry a "nice girl," but having nothing to offer her. The next two children are "awkward, silent boys," who know how to work but seldom have an opportunity. Three younger boys attend school irregularly because of poor clothing and frequent moving. The three youngest need medical attention, clothing, and toys. The married daughter was recently very ill, but was refused admission to the County Hospital because she was not a legal resident. David's brother Justin came to California at the same time as David. But he had been more fortunate in North Dakota and brought enough money to establish himself on a small farm near Sacramento. The story of the migrations follows.

When David and Sophie married, he took his savings to make a down payment on another rocky farm, purchasing stock and implements on time. They struggled for years, with an added mouth to feed every other year. The farm was paid for in 1922 against great odds. One year there would be no rain and no crop; next there would be too much rain, and black rust would ruin the crop; the next year an unexpected

[1] Adapted from *Migratory Labor in California* (1936), pp. 157–70. By permission of the California State Relief Administration.

frost would kill the year's hopes; the next the cholera would kill the hogs. About one year out of six, the year-long bitter work would be rewarded with success. Finally, at a precarious time in 1929, five of David's horses were killed in a railroad accident. In the circumstances, the loss was irrecoverable. After twenty years of struggle, David sold the farm for $3,400, paid his debts, and sank the small remainder in a used car. He packed Sophie and the eleven children into it and set out for Idaho.

"We land there broke. We got nothing, just us." The plan was to work until enough was earned for another farm, but the only work to be had was seasonal labor. In Idaho, this was in onions, potatoes, and especially sugar beets. The five oldest children worked with their parents in the fields. In May, they found a month's work thinning beets. In June, the beets were hoed. There was then a dull period, with uncertain odd jobs, until the beets were ready to top, this work lasting through October. In 1932, the whole year's earnings of the family were $700. In 1933, the total earnings were $900. The family first applied to the Idaho Emergency Relief Administration in the fall of 1933. Before this period, the family had been frequently cold, frequently hungry, and always poorly dressed. They had had no previous relief of any sort. "Me, I like to work for what I get." In 1934, flies killed the beet crop, and there was no work. After another winter on Idaho E.R.A., where the total relief budget allowed for this whole family was never more than $65 monthly, Sophie and the children were packed into an old Cadillac, for which the previous car had been traded, and the family set out for the promised land, California.

The history of the family's migrations in California begins April, 1935. While traveling in California, the family has been in the habit of camping near the place where work was to be had. Usually a camp with some sort of toilet, shower, and laundry facilities was available for a low price (about $3 a week); if not, the family camped in the open. They still have a twelve-by-sixteen-foot tent which, after five years of use, is torn beyond the point of usefulness. The household belongings were packed in the clumsy trailer; the family, in toto, was packed in the sedan. Cooking was done partly on the oil stove, partly on an outdoor campfire; it was usually one "big dish," like beans, potatoes, macaroni, or a "mess" of the cheapest vegetable on the market, supplemented by strong coffee for the whole family. The weary Sophie and her oldest

daughter are emphatic about the difficulties of constant travel and outdoor life with so many young children.

The family landed in Clarksville, and for the last two weeks of April found work for themselves and the older children in lettuce and carrot fields. From here, they went to Lodi and picked peas for three weeks in May. Five weeks, ending in the last of June, they worked in onions and potatoes near Shafter. They were working in apricots at Modesto in July, and worked in peaches at Salinas for two weeks in August. They went from here to Lodi, but found no work. They stayed in a large camping ground, living in their car, their trailer, and an old tent. They rented the space for their household for $3 a week, but, when they had no work for two weeks, the manager of the grounds evicted them because "the family was too big." For five weeks, ending the last of September, they worked at Knight's Landing in prunes, but this work was irregular. The sledding was hard for the whole family.

At this point, the family landed in Sacramento where they spent one week with brother Justin, who had also been doing seasonal labor and was at the moment out of work. In Sacramento, they applied to the State Relief Administration for the first time, receiving one grocery order for a family of twelve. Then grapes in Lodi were ripe, and the family found employment from September to November. They were paid $2.50 a ton for the grapes, but their work was delayed because the wineries were full and they were not permitted to pick the grapes as rapidly as possible, so that two weeks' work had to be spread over the entire period. Seven of the children were now old enough to be of use in the fields.

At the end of the grape season in Lodi, the family had a fund of $100. They rented a farm three miles east of the small town where they are now located, paying two months' rent and buying $25 worth of hay, fifty chickens, and ten turkeys, leaving the family quite broke. The farm was leased from Mr. Jacob R— for a year, but the Krause family has been able to manage only the $30 first payment. It was at this point that the family applied for a rehabilitation loan, but the first attempt was vetoed because the lease should have been for three years and Mr. R— refused to extend it that long. After several other attempts to find a farm satisfactory for resettlement purposes, David Krause rented the present place temporarily through Mrs. S—, resident in Oakland. The rent for the place was officially $12, but actually

the Krauses could only pay $10. They moved to this place on the sixteenth of December. There is no seasonal labor now available. David tried four days of work on a near-by farm and earned only $6, which was barely enough to pay for his gas. Once again the family appealed to the S.R.A. for a grocery order. Through Mr. M—, the family obtained $56 from the Rural Resettlement Administration to tide them over until some final adjustment was made on the matter of the rehabilitation loan. David explained that another farm and house more suitable for his large family must be found before the loan will be available. A promise of another such payment through Rural Resettlement, due January 20, is all the family has to depend upon at the moment.

The attitude of the local people toward the Krause family is especially interesting. There is not enough employment in the neighborhood for the sons of local farmers, and outsiders are not welcome. Mr. M—, principal of the grammar school, reported that after the town chapter of the Red Cross had supplied the three schoolboys with clothes, he had himself carried the Krause family a box of groceries on Christmas Eve. "They shoved something under the bed," he reports; and he discovered later that a philanthropic neighbor had already given them a Christmas box. The rumor then started that the two oldest boys had come into town on that same Christmas Eve and spent $15 apiece on whisky. Naturally enough, this story rather soured the town's philanthropic attitude toward the Krauses. The worker thought it worth while to run this rumor to earth, and, after tracing it through several townspeople, located the druggist who had made the sale. It was not the two boys but papa Krause himself who had made the purchase; it was not $30 worth of whisky but a half pint for which a $5 bill had been broken. It was on the twenty-fourth of December that the Krause family received the $56 Rural Resettlement check, and possibly old David thought the occasion warranted a half pint's worth of Christmas Eve celebration.

In the pursuit of this rumor, another was unearthed. It seemed that the three oldest Krause boys, who were "a bad lot," had been arrested for drunken and reckless driving, and had not only been fined $50 but had managed promptly to pay the fine. The worker interviewed the constable, State Highway Patrol, and the police-court judge of the vicinity. It was not the Krause boys who had been so charged and fined, but old Justin Krause, David's brother, who can perhaps afford such luxuries. David had been with Justin and had been fined $5 for drunkenness only, Justin

having paid this fine for him. David has had no other conflict with the authorities and has never been in a labor dispute. The only other charge against any member of the family was the charge against Paul for reckless driving on January 11. The Krauses had turned in the old Cadillac for a Buick because the Cadillac used such enormous quantities of gas. On the day of the trade, Paul had been picked up for speeding in the new car on the highway, and for this was sentenced to twelve days in jail. Neither Paul nor any of his brothers have been arrested on any other charge, and we have the police-court judge's word that Paul had not been drinking. The exchange of the Cadillac for the Buick, for which $90 is still owed, has given the town the impression that the Krause family is driving two cars. All in all, there is evidence of a marked tendency in the community to believe the worst of these outsiders who threaten to become a community problem.

The family of David Krause has not been on the road long enough to be called habitually migratory, but they are completely detached from the organized life of any local community. Similar to transient families in some respects and different in others are the unattached individuals, mostly men and boys, who wander up and down the land. We present two brief sketches.

### A Restless Youth [2]

Charles H—, age twenty-four, from New England, was graduated from a small college in the spring of 1931. He obtained a position in the accounting department of a large New York corporation at twenty-four dollars a week. In 1932, he was included in a wholesale layoff of clerks, and remained in New York looking for work until his small savings were exhausted. He returned to his parents; but, after a few months, became so restless at the enforced dependency that he borrowed enough money from his father to return to New York to look for work. When he found it impossible to obtain any form of employment, his pride would not let him return to his parents and dependency a second time.

Convinced that New York City held no possibility of employment for him, Charles used his remaining funds to get to Chicago, where the Century of Progress exercised a double attraction—the widely publicized

[2] John N. Webb, *The Transient Unemployed* (1935), pp. 125–6.

exhibits, and possibility of obtaining employment where so much was happening.

When he arrived in Chicago, he found that he was one of thousands who had come for much the same reason. Unable to find work, and quickly reduced to destitution, he was about to ask that word be sent to his parents when he made the acquaintance of a boy who had been on the road for about six months, and who offered to take Charles with him on a trip to California.

In the next eighteen months, Charles traveled back and forth across the Western and Southwestern states, his route determined by curiosity, rumors, and chance companions. Occasionally he found work for short periods of time, but clothes became so worn that he was refused consideration on sight. Gradually he came to depend upon transient centers and camps for food, shelter, and clothes. He traveled under an assumed name, gave a fictitious home address, and never stayed long enough in any place to allow the transient-relief officials to investigate his story. His reason for this was that he feared he might be identified, and that his parents would be notified.

In the spring of 1935, he obtained permanent employment through one of the transient bureaus; and, after working about six months, notified his parents of his whereabouts and apparently resumed a stable way of living.

### A Wandering Job Seeker [3]

Steve P—, age thirty-eight, was born in rural West Virginia. He was taken out of school at the age of fourteen and put to work in a coal mine. He disliked the unpleasant and difficult work in the mines, but had neither the money to leave nor the training to change employment. By 1917, he quit the mines to serve in the army, and extended his stay by re-enlisting at the termination of the War.

In 1922, he returned to West Virginia, married, and resumed work in the coal mines. He continued this employment for ten years; but, because of the frequent shutdown of the mines, he was unable to provide his family with anything but the barest necessities of life.

After months of unemployment in 1932 and 1933, Mr. P— obtained for the family a small relief allowance which, because of its regularity, enabled them to live more comfortably than they had in years.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 122.

With his family provided for, Mr. P— set out in search of work. His only concern was that the work be in some industry other than mining, and that he could move his family out of West Virginia. At the time, he was registered at the Denver, Colorado, transient bureau, Mr. P— had traveled by freight over the entire Southwest and Pacific Coast. During his travels he had obtained short-time work as harvest hand, unskilled laborer on construction work, and as a fish-cannery worker. None of these jobs lasted more than a month.

*Historic Roles and Status of Transients.* Since men first began to occupy settled abodes, it has been generally assumed that each individual belonged to some particular locality group—tribe, village, parish, county, or state. When people moved, they commonly went in groups rather than singly as in our day. This was true of preliterates, the peoples of antiquity, of feudal estates, medieval towns, and colonial America. Through most of human history, it appears that the overwhelming majority of mankind has lived in rather small, compact groups, each attached to some locality and relatively isolated from other groups. In his own community, each person had status, protection, and companionship. Away from home, he was a stranger, the object of curiosity, fear, or hatred. So long as physical hazards were great and means of transportation and communication were poor, most people moved within a very limited radius.

This may be illustrated by the fixity and isolation of local groups during the Middle Ages. Within manor, parish, gild, or religious community, there were intimate acquaintance, communal activities, production for home consumption, and a close approach to local autonomy. Between the nobles who controlled local areas, there were frequent hostilities. Most roads were very bad; tolls and customs duties had to be paid at frequent intervals; robbers of low and high degree infested the countryside. So most people stayed at home. But there were some migratory folk at all times—peddlers, pilgrims, begging friars, knights-errant, mendicants, and run-

away serfs. Various efforts were made to control these strangers. Traveling ecclesiastics had to have special credentials from a bishop or pope. Merchants had to account for the persons in their train. Fugitive slaves and serfs and those who gave them shelter were treated harshly. "Sturdy rogues" and "false poor" were ordered to leave the community under threat of stocks, whipping, branding, or imprisonment.

In England, the Statute of Laborers (1349) required working people to stay in their home communities, accept customary wages, and refrain from begging. The first Poor Law (1536) required "valiant beggars" to be whipped and ordered to their home parishes. On producing a testimonial of having been thus whipped and sent on, they were to be given food and shelter every ten miles. If they loitered on the way, a part of the right ear was to be cut off. If they offended again, they were to suffer death as felons. The Settlement Act (1662) made each parish responsible for needy persons who had legal domicile within its limits. This legal residence was practically restricted to those who were born or apprenticed in the parish. When one wandered away, he might be returned, if he became dependent or was considered likely to be a burden on the community.

With such traditions of local responsibility, the English settled on the Atlantic Coast of North America. In the colonies, the margin of subsistence was narrow. It was not feasible to harbor indigents and incompetents, least of all those who might drift in from other settlements. So the old attitudes toward strangers continued in the new land. Newcomers were generally required to secure permission to become residents of a local community. Undesirables were warned to depart from the town. Sometimes it was forbidden to sell property to a stranger without approval of the authorities. Thus, in various ways, the notions of local identification and of communal responsibility were made effective. However, with a constant stream of new arrivals from the Old World

and with constant pushing back of the frontier, it was difficult to enforce the old laws and mores. From the seventeenth century to the twentieth, there has been a conflict between the traditions of attachment to a particular community and the lure of adventure.

The winning of the West was obviously accomplished only by the willingness of hundreds of thousands to break old associations, strike out across mountains and plains, and seek their fortune in new places. Sometimes they went in good-sized groups, sometimes by ones and twos. Some of them moved directly to a destination and settled down for the rest of their days. Others shifted about from place to place before finally establishing new homes. Still others became prospectors, trappers, cowboys, lumberjacks—habitual migrants who never found a resting place until their days on earth were numbered.

As population pushed westward, large numbers of able-bodied, unattached men were required for the building of turnpikes, canals, railroads, dams, transmission lines, and other engineering projects. Similar demands for a mobile labor supply were made by the mining and lumbering industries and by agriculture. For many years, the wheat harvest called for thousands of migratory workers who could follow the ripening crop from Texas to North Dakota. Smaller numbers have been needed by the growers of sugar beets, apples, walnuts, citrus fruits, potatoes, lettuce, melons, and other farm products.

After the Northeastern states had become largely urban and industrial, a new source of transiency arose. Intermittently, business depressions deprived thousands, eventually millions, of their jobs and set them adrift in search of better opportunities elsewhere. Some found steady jobs in new places; others became migratory, casual laborers; not a few became drifters who ceased to work. During the great depression beginning in 1929, the numbers of such wanderers increased, much to the consternation of taxpayers,

social workers, and wage earners who feared the competition of the transients. To the migratory industrial workers were added evicted sharecroppers from the South and dispossessed farmers from the "Dust Bowl."

*Numbers and Types of Present-Day Transients.* No one has ever known how many transients there really were. During the past twenty years, estimates have ranged from half a million to five million. In 1923, Anderson estimated that there passed through Chicago each year 450,000 unattached men.[4] In 1924, Nylander reported that "there is believed to be between 1,700,000 and 2,000,000 of these migrants." [5] During the conduct of the transient-relief program of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration from 1933 to 1935, "the maximum size of the transient relief population . . . was 200,000 unattached persons and 50,000 family groups." But because of the constantly changing personnel, "it seems probable that the number of individuals and family groups that at some time received assistance from transient bureaus was two to three times these estimates." [6] From 1935 to 1938, the Association of American Railroads reported an annual average of 4,200,000 "illegal train riders and trespassers removed from trains, prevented from getting on trains, or ejected from railroad premises but not arrested." [7] Of course, there were many duplications in these counts, so we are still in ignorance of the number of separate persons who attempted to beat their way by rail. Furthermore, these figures take no account of the transients who sought to "thumb" their way along the highways or who provided their own transportation. In 1933, the Committee on Care of Transient and Homeless, appointed by the National Social Work Council, secured data from 1,300 agencies in 800 cities which indicated that

[4] Nels Anderson, *The Hobo* (1923), p. 106.

[5] Towne Nylander, "The Migratory Population of the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, 30 (1924), 129.

[6] Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

[7] Quoted in a bulletin issued by the St. Louis Bureau for Men, Dec., 1938.

there were probably 1,225,000 transient and homeless persons. Nearly 300,000 were counted as homeless but legal residents of the place in which they asked for help. Seven hundred thousand were clearly transient; of these, about 50,000 were women and girls. No estimate was made of the migratory families.[8]

These wanderers have been classified in various ways. In the first place, there are unattached individuals and family groups. In the second place, there are newcomers to the road and habitual migrants. Among the newcomers are some who might be designated simply as nonresidents. They have previously been rather stable members of some community, but following some crisis in their lives have set out to try their luck in a new place. Perhaps they have been stranded en route; perhaps they have reached the intended destination, but without funds, friends, or employment. Others have sought work in a number of areas without much success, and might therefore be called transient unemployed. Persons of the first subtype frequently graduate into the second.

Among the habitual migrants are some who wander and work, others who wander without working. The first are often called hobos, the second tramps. To the hobos should be added the transient families that move about from one type of seasonal or casual labor to another. To the tramps should be added the mobile families of dependents who go about begging and sometimes stealing. From both migratory groups should be distinguished the "home guard" of local homeless who are irregularly employed, and the "bums" who neither work nor wander.

Some information as to the kinds of folk found among the nonresident and transient unemployed has been made available by the Division of Social Research of the Works Progress Administration.[9] A study of persons served by the Federal transient-relief program showed that most of them were under thirty-five years

[8] Mimeographed report issued Feb. 21, 1933.

[9] Webb, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–3, 24–57.

of age, native white, with a grade-school education, unskilled and semiskilled men and boys apparently able and willing to work. Unattached transients came chiefly from states east of the Mississippi, and transient families came chiefly from states west of the Mississippi. The majority of both types came from cities and towns, but there was a significant minority from villages and farms. It is important to bear these facts in mind, for they indicate that the popular prejudice against transients rests on no fundamental differences between the mobile and the stable population, but on the fact that they are strangers. "They don't belong."

No equally satisfactory data are at hand concerning the habitual wanderers, but studies of small samples indicate that the most obvious differences between them and the type just described are in age and length of time on the road. On the average, they appear to be ten years older. More than half of them have spent eight years or more in migratory, casual work. But like the newer transients, they are mainly native white men and boys. Many of them travel regularly over rather large areas, depending on work that is seasonal or intermittent and for the most part casual in nature. The routes they follow have been described in a number of reports.[10]

*How They Became Transients.* In the effort to account for our million transients, it is necessary to consider several different sorts of factors. First, we may note the historic and the geographic. The frontier is not far behind us and the traditions of pioneer life are still alive. For anyone who finds the immediate conditions of life difficult, there is the lure of a distant horizon. "Somewhere things are bound to be better." Even yet "the great expanse of the country, with its variety of climates and its low population density in widely separated areas of production, is a primary factor in an ex-

[10] John N. Webb, *The Migratory-Casual Laborer* (1937); Marion Hathway, *The Migratory Worker and Family Life* (1934); California State Relief Administration, *Migratory Labor in California* (1936).

planation of the continued existence of the migratory-casual worker." [11] Crops mature and must be harvested at different times of the year in different sections. Various other types of work must be done on a seasonal basis. Some of these are logging, fishing, construction, mining. But these jobs are scattered over a large area. In any given section, there is not enough steady work, and jobs do not succeed one another closely enough to maintain a resident labor force able to meet the maximum demand. Hence, during the peak of operations, migratory workers move in, and, after it is past, they move on to other sections.

Already we have added to the historic and the geographic factors the economic. For the irregularity of employment in agriculture, lumbering, mining, and other industries is not due entirely to climate, but also to men's failure to organize their economic processes so as to minimize waste and increase security. Diversification of crops, introduction of new machinery, new techniques in the building trades, enlarged storage facilities for fuel, integration of the labor market, co-ordination of industry and agriculture, and year-round planning promise more stable employment and movement within a more limited area.

Other cultural factors include the cult of travel and the myth of health-giving regions. With the advertising of tourist bureaus, the building of good roads and cheap cars, and the spread of the vacation habit, it is natural that many people should respond to the lure of the road. With the coming of tourist camps and trailers, it is still easier for those without strong ties to some locality to become habitual migrants. The search for a fountain of youth, or at least a surcease from rheumatism and sinus infections, is very old. But again the advertising bureaus have done their bit. In fact, they have so overdone it that chambers of commerce, taxpayers' leagues, and social agencies of the Southwest wish the tuberculous, the cardiac, the arthritic, and the allergic would remain at home—

[11] John N. Webb, *The Migratory-Casual Worker* (1937), p. 10.

unless, of course, they come with pockets full of gold. Hence, it is natural that in regions overrun with impecunious travelers the ancient practice of "passing on" should be revived. Now this "passing on," whether engaged in by relief agencies or the police, is at once an expression of hostility and an encouragement to wander.

In an entirely different way, the life of the road is facilitated by the institutions which cater to homeless and transient men. In fact, some cities have rather well-defined areas characterized by such institutions and by a shifting population of unattached men. In Kansas City, Chicago, and other centers of hobo and tramp life, "Hobohemia" is filled with cheap lodginghouses, crude lunch counters where service is rough and ready, secondhand clothing stores, employment agencies, and missions. On the edge of the district are pawnshops, barber "colleges," soft-drink stands, "blind pigs," cheap movies, and burlesque shows. The institutions within Hobohemia serve the homeless men almost exclusively, providing them with food and clothing and places to sleep and loaf. Those on the borders of Hobohemia depend partly upon the trade of the more permanent population, but cater also to the needs of the homeless. Here it is possible to see a very poor moving picture or burlesque show for ten cents, to get a shave or haircut for ten or fifteen cents, to buy a complete outfit of clothing for a very few dollars, secure a meal for fifteen to twenty cents and a night's lodging for ten to fifty cents. Standards of living are low in Hobohemia. Lodginghouses and restaurants are dark, dirty, and unventilated. The quality of food and of clothing is poor, and amusements are of the lowest imaginable type.

We have seen how geographic conditions, coupled with traditional modes of carrying on agriculture, lumbering, construction, and other industries, have created a demand for migratory workers. We have found other culture complexes—advertising, the pursuit of health, the vacation habit, cheap means of transportation, and Hobohemia—facilitating the life of the road. But the presence

of these environmental factors does not explain why it is that some people become wanderers while others remain in one locality. Obviously there must be personal differences. One very amazing interpretation is that transiency is an hereditary characteristic transmitted according to the Mendelian principles.[12] More plausible is the statement that some chronic wanderers were actually born on the road; they and others were taken from place to place by their parents so early and so frequently that they developed habits of moving on at the slightest provocation. Undoubtedly some transients are intellectually inferior and emotionally unstable. But what percentage is thus socially inadequate, we have as yet no means of knowing. One observer has been impressed with their immaturity, which he describes in terms of "continuation of adolescent behavior." [13] Whatever else may be true, these people have been so "conditioned to a life of constant travel that it is difficult to wean them from the road." [14] The personality traits thus developed have been variously characterized as exaggerated wish for new experience, strong spirit of restlessness, wanderlust, or, in the jargon of the transients, "itchy feet." Mrs. Solenberger [15] tells the story of a young deaf-mute who came to the United Charities in Chicago asking for transportation to St. Paul. Because he knew no one in that city and would have no means of support upon his arrival, his request was refused. Instantly, he shifted his ground, asked for a ticket to a city in central Illinois, then to Iowa, then to "anywhere out West." It was learned that he had been in Chicago less than three hours, but he was impatient of questions, and wrote on a piece of paper, "I must go on. I cannot stay. I have nothing to do, so I travel always. I do not stay anywhere." Speaking especially of the hobo Park says:

[12] William J. Tinkle, "Heredity of Habitual Wandering," *Journal of Heredity*, 18 (1927), 548–51.

[13] Robert S. Wilson, "Transient Families," *Family*, 11 (1930), 243–51.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

[15] Alice W. Solenberger, *One Thousand Homeless Men* (1911), p. 218.

He has gained his freedom, but he has lost his direction. Locomotion and change of scene have had for him no ulterior significance. It is locomotion for its own sake. Restlessness and the impulse to escape from the routine of ordinary life, which in the case of others frequently marks the beginning of some new enterprise, spends itself for him in movements that are expressive merely. The hobo seeks change solely for the sake of change; it is a habit, and, like the drug habit, moves in a vicious circle. The more he wanders, the more he must.[16]

Behind the habits and attitudes which seem to dominate the personality of the chronic wanderer often lies some unmet crisis. Boys sometimes take to the road because of unpleasant conditions at home. There may be a stepparent or poverty or lack of understanding. Friction develops, and in a moment of resentment the break is made. In the cases of older men, there is frequently marital discord and desertion. Some men leave their families whenever a new baby is coming; some go away nearly every spring; some put up with nagging, slovenly housekeeping, extravagance, and quarreling until it seems impossible to stand them any longer. In other instances, the loneliness which followed the death of a mate has been the occasion of going on the road. Women and girls become wanderers less frequently than men and boys; when they do, the unmet crises are much the same. Oftentimes there have been embarrassing situations, entanglements with members of the opposite sex, or other scandals, which made it easier to leave home than to stay behind and face the criticism or sympathy of neighbors. Sometimes the migratory career began when the person fled from the consequences of a criminal act. In recent years, the immediate occasion of going away from home and community has been economic. The unemployment of a wage earner, loss of home through foreclosure of a mortgage or tax sale, eviction of a farm tenant, crop failure, and general discouragement because of hard times appear in story after story.

[16] Robert E. Park, "The Mind of the Rover," *World Tomorrow*, 6 (1923), 269.

Sometimes the failure is more obviously that of society and its organized agencies rather than of the men themselves. Wherever licenses are granted to the crippled and blind to sell lead pencils and shoestrings as a cover for begging, society is directly encouraging men, who might have been put on their feet, to become permanently dependent. Whenever the police arrest a vagrant, who is sentenced by the court to ten days in a jail or ordered to leave town in two hours, a man who is yet only a mild unemployable, still adaptable perhaps to becoming a useful workman, may thus be driven into the ranks of the really chronically unemployable. Whenever an organization provides transportation to some other community without due inquiry, it is probably encouraging an already overdeveloped spirit of restlessness. When almshouse doors are open to hobos and tramps to come and go as they wish, society is making another contribution to irresponsibility and unrest. Whenever a religious mission offers "soup, flop, and salvation" without inquiring into the specific needs of homeless men, it is directly encouraging hypocrisy and demonstrating another easy way to live without working. Whenever an orphanage makes the life of boys and girls so mechanical that they cannot develop a spirit of independence or habits of initiative, it is preparing them to go with the crowd, to seek the easiest way out of difficulties later in life, and to run away from their troubles instead of facing them squarely. Whenever a citizen drops a quarter in a beggar's cup, buys a pencil, and says, "Keep the change," serves a meal from the back door, or offers a castoff coat to an unknown man, he is helping to perpetuate a demoralizing social situation.

*Social Distance Between Transient and Settled Folk.* We come now to the heart of our problem: How much does transiency handicap one for social participation? Unfortunately, we have no precise measures of this, but widespread observation indicates that there is a real social barrier between most transients and most settled inhabitants. "There is a popular habit of calling persons 'workers'

when they are needed to harvest a ripened crop, and of referring to them as 'bums' during the slack season that follows." [17] One hobo is reported to have said, "In harvest time we are begged to come to town by the Chamber of Commerce. We stay until the harvest is over and then we are chased out of town by the cop." [18] In 1936, the city of Los Angeles sent municipal police to the state border to turn back needy persons seeking to enter California. The *Los Angeles Times* was quoted as commending efforts toward "ridding the State of indigent transients." But it also remarked that "if a labor shortage should develop later on, it would be easy to modify the regulations so that seasonal workers might be admitted." [19] In other words, when farm hands were needed, the transients were acceptable, but when their labor was not required, they were to be excluded as undesirable.

Other manifestations of the conventional hostility toward migratory folk may be found in vagrancy laws and their enforcement. These statutes and ordinances refer to persons "found loitering without visible means of support in any community, or who, being without visible means of support, shall refuse to work when work at fair wage is to be procured in the community." They also mention "any person begging, or selling some inexpensive article as a beggar, or playing some musical instrument and soliciting funds from the public therefor." [20] Under such laws, it is possible for the police to pick up almost any nonresident, especially when jobs are scarce. After arresting him, the police may lock him up on a vagrancy charge. Within a few hours or days, he may be taken to court and given a jail sentence or a fine, which amounts to the same thing because he rarely has any money. Very often the police will simply tell the stranger to move on. Sometimes he will be

[17] John N. Webb, *The Migratory-Casual Laborer* (1937), p. 2.
[18] A. E. Holt, "'Bos," *Survey*, 60 (1928), 457.
[19] *Loc. cit.*
[20] Ordinance No. 7402, Wichita, Kansas.

released from jail with the admonition to get going. Even the judge may suspend sentence and order the transient to leave town within half an hour. We once saw 250 hobos and tramps chased out of a Western town, only those who could show a meal ticket or a receipt for room rent being permitted to remain. In addition to local officers, railroad police and state police make life miserable for many a wandering individual or family. When these people are in dire need, hospitalization and other emergency relief may be refused because they have no legal residence in the local community. All these and many other unfriendly acts give expression to historic prejudices and to present-day hostility toward the "rolling stone who gathers no moss."

Besides this obvious rejection, transients are subject to more or less exploitation. Some employers desire "a mobile labor reserve large enough to handle peak operations and a labor supply that must accept low wages, long hours and poor working conditions without effective protest. . . . An oversupply of migratory-casual workers keeps the wage rate low, permits some selection of the working force, provides immediate replacements for those who leave before the work is done, and operates as a check on the organization of workers to improve working conditions." [21] When the transients do attempt to form unions, as they did in 1914 under the leadership of the I.W.W., and more recently with the guidance of the C.I.O., they are opposed by vigilantes, legionnaires, associated farmers, chambers of commerce, and other representatives of the settled population. A different sort of exploitation occurs at election time in cities where transients gather intermittently. The "ghost" voters of river wards in St. Louis, the North End in Kansas City, and corresponding parts of other cities serve well the purposes of political machines, with little benefit to the migrants themselves. In still another sense, they are exploited by the proprietors and managers of lodginghouses, saloons, pawn-

[21] John N. Webb, *The Migratory-Casual Worker* (1937), pp. 12–13.

shops, and missions. Without the migratory men, many of these agencies would have little *raison d'être,* and their operators would have to seek other means of subsistence. To a certain extent, employers, politicians, lodginghouse proprietors, saloonkeepers, pawnbrokers, and especially city missionaries befriend the transients. But withal, there is a social barrier between the stable and the mobile folk, which is the basis of exploitation, on the one hand, and resentment, on the other.

There are still other forms of social exclusion. Children of migratory families are out of school a great deal. Not only are they retarded academically, but they are made to feel that they do not belong. Their irregular attendance, their poor clothes, and the expressed prejudices of the elders of the community often cause the regular pupils to look upon the transient youngsters with disdain. Both children and adults are limited in the range of personal acquaintances and close friends. They do not stay long enough in one place to become real members of neighborhood and community groups. Participation in trade-union, lodge, and church is very little. Even the I.W.W. found it almost impossible to keep track of their members and collect dues. Transients are frequently excluded from voting, except when needed by ward heelers and not challenged by representatives of the other side. Hobohemia and the "jungles," in which migrants spend their time while in a city or town, are segregated areas little known by the "respectable" members of society. Thus, in many ways, transients are isolated from the activities of social groups. Twenty years ago an I.W.W. leader gave expression to the vague resentment of the folk without a home or a community: [22]

You ask me why the I.W.W. is not patriotic to the United States. If you were a bum without a blanket; if you had left your wife and kids when you went west for a job, and had never located them since; if your

[22] Carlton Parker, *The Casual Laborer* (1920), p. 102. By permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

job had never kept you long enough in a place to qualify you to vote; if you slept in a lousy, sour bunkhouse, and deputy sheriffs shot your cooking pans full of holes and spilled your grub on the ground; if your wages were lowered on you when the bosses thought they had you down; if there was one law for Ford, Suhr and Mooney, and another for Harry Thaw; if every person who represented law and order and the nation beat you up, railroaded you to jail, and the good Christian people cheered and told them to go to it, how in hell do you expect a man to be patriotic? This war is a business man's war and we don't see why we should go out and get shot in order to save the lovely state of affairs which we now enjoy.

*Policies and Programs.* In general, the policy of states and of local communities has been to get rid of transients as quickly as possible. This, of course, has not promoted social participation, but has operated in exactly the opposite direction. However, there have been for centuries a few agencies and activities that have served transients at least in material ways. In the Middle Ages, monasteries and so-called hospitals offered food, shelter, and other physical necessities. Individuals of high and low estate offered alms at the door. But neither institutions nor individuals did much to attach wanderers to any social group. On the whole, the same comments are true of contemporary American city missions and lodging-houses. However, many other social agencies have entered into a transportation agreement which provides for inquiry before sending transients away, caring for them during the inquiry, and providing transportation all the way to a legitimate destination. By a legitimate destination is meant a place of legal residence or other locality in which there is definite assurance of employment or support. Travelers-aid societies, in co-operation with family-welfare and child-caring agencies, have developed case work for transients, in which efforts are made to meet their individual needs through planned migration or settled residence in some local group.

In 1933, the Federal government set up a transient-relief program. Special funds were allocated for the care of nonresidents through state relief administrations. Centers were established for

registration and personal service. Shelters and camps were created with schemes of work, recreation, and medical attention. Attempts were made to re-establish wanderers in their home communities or to attach them to other localities when either seemed feasible. But before the results of this program could be appraised, it was discontinued. Responsibility was thrown back on the state and local governments and on private philanthropy. After only two years of effort to develop a co-ordinated program for transients, we are back in the stage of uncertain care by private agencies and "buck passing" by public agencies. One thoughtful social worker has summed up the matter in these words:

Efforts toward a solution could evolve in three directions, depending on one's faith. If you conceive of migrancy as an evil, you would try to struggle toward an organization of society that would make it unnecessary for an ever-increasing portion of the people to pull up their roots and abandon their old backgrounds. If you accept it as an unavoidable if passing expression of present disorganization, you would urge an intensification of the efforts now being made to minimize its disruptive effects: improved housing and hygiene, migratory schools, unemployment service to direct and decrease the flow of labor, subsistence farms and regional planning of crops so as to utilize a fixed body of labor throughout the greater part of the year. If, however, you believe migrancy to be a forward step toward a new freedom, or if you believe it permanently inevitable, you would attempt to prepare the individual to adjust to an ever-changing environment by teaching him to renounce the old securities and to discover and develop new ones within himself, independent of home and neighborhood. This would mean the acceptance of wandering as a normal way of life and would necessitate the building up of a new set of folk-ideals to replace the "old oaken bucket" ideals of the past.

These three paths may prove not as divergent as they seem, and a solution may draw from all three. While we are waiting for a reorganization of society, people may learn to become more adjustable without disrupting their fundamental securities, and the conditions to which they are forced to adjust may become more socially workable.[23]

[23] Irma Weill, "We've Been Rollin'?" *Family*, 16 (1936), 321. By permission of *The Family*.

## Suggested Readings

Anderson, Nels, *The Hobo*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1923. An excellent study of homeless men, prepared for the Chicago Council of Social Agencies.

California State Relief Administration, *Migratory Labor in California*. San Francisco: S.R.A. mimeographed report, 1936. A historical and statistical study, together with four case histories.

Hathway, Marion, *The Migratory Worker and Family Life*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934. A study of 100 migrant families in the Pacific Northwest.

Minehan, Thomas, *Boy and Girl Tramps of America*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1934. The impressions of a "participant observer" traveling over six states with migrant youths.

Steinbeck, John, *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: The Viking Press, 1939. A piece of fiction which portrays vividly the experiences of a family which became migrant; not merely its physical hardships but also the violent antagonism of property owners and other settled folk.

Sutherland, Edwin H., and Locke, Harvey J., *Twenty Thousand Homeless Men*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1936. A study of unemployed men in Chicago shelters.

Webb, John N., *The Transient Unemployed*. Washington: Works Progress Administration, Research Monograph III, 1935. A description and analysis of the transient-relief population cared for by the Federal government.

Webb, John N., *The Migratory-Casual Worker*. Washington: Works Progress Administration, Research Monograph VII, 1937. A study of the personal characteristics and experiences of those who work and wander.

Webb, John N., and Brown, Malcolm, *Migrant Families*. Washington: Works Progress Administration, Research Monograph XVIII, 1938. A study of 5,500 migrant families cared for by transient bureaus in 1935.

## Projects for Further Study

1. If there are enough migratory folk in the vicinity to make inquiry profitable, ask representative citizens what they think about the transients and what they believe should be done for or to them. Record the responses

as nearly verbatim as possible. Classify the responses as (1) friendly, (2) tolerant, (3) indifferent, (4) irritated, (5) definitely antagonistic. What is the relative number of responses of each type? Which type of response predominates among those of farmers? Of merchants? Of public officials? Of trade-unionists? Of housewives?

2. What has been the practice of the local community and state with reference to transients? Cover as long a period as possible, particularly noting depression years such as 1914, 1921, 1929.

3. What are the characteristics of transients now in the vicinity as to age, sex, birthplace, schooling, occupation, marital status, membership in organized groups. If no survey has been made and none can be made while the course is in progress, answers may be based on observation and interviews. But even a crude census would be preferable to guesses.

4. If they will submit to it, give a number of transients Chapin's "Social Participation Scale." Score, tabulate, and compare with other groups.

5. Is there, or has there been, in the vicinity a settlement of more or less transient people and bearing some such name as Hooverville, the jungles, Dogtown? If so, secure as much information as possible about its history, inhabitants, customs, relations to the settled population of near-by districts. Especially what are the opinions and attitudes of other people toward this colony and its occupants? (See Stuart A. Queen and Lewis F. Thomas, *The City*, pp. 303–05.)

6. What state laws and local ordinances are (or may be) used on behalf of or against transients? What extralegal measures have been taken (e. g., turning back migrants from the state border, ordering them out of town)?

7. If feasible, interview some transients. Ask them to tell as much of their own stories as they will; especially how they came to be migrants, how they have been treated by officials, social workers, employers, and other settled folk. What opinions and attitudes do they express? *Caution:* They may indulge in rationalizations. They may be very restrained because of fear or politeness. They may exaggerate stories of mistreatment. Here is a good occasion for discussing evidence. (See Mary E. Richmond, *Social Diagnosis*, chaps. 2, 3, 4; Pauline V. Young, *Interviewing in Social Work*, chaps. 12, 13, 14.)

8. Visit some shelter for transient men or boys. Discuss with the superintendent problems presented, facilities provided, amount of participa-

tion indulged in by inmates, relationship with families. If possible, secure (this might be an individual research project) some data from their registration as to age, localities from which they came, length of time at shelter, number and nearness of relatives, marital status.

9. Review some literature on transient families as to perennial and seasonal migrants. The U. S. Department of Labor has factual information on migratory labor. Note such economic and social factors as level of living, family relationships, earnings, and facilities available for leisure-time activities.

# *Chapter 15*

# LIMITED SCHOOLING: THE UNEDUCATED

IN the discussions of low income, unemployment, and transiency, we pointed to limited schooling as one of the consequences of these experiences. We also noted that limited schooling may be a contributing factor in low income, unemployment, and transiency. Still other factors may be found, along with those just mentioned, in complex situations and sequences where relations of cause and effect are hard, if not impossible, to identify. Perhaps the whole matter might be restated in this fashion: in contemporary America persons of very limited schooling are likely to be (*a*) of low intelligence, (*b*) of low economic status, (*c*) members of partially segregated ethnic groups, especially Negroes and Indians, or (*d*) residents of rural areas in which educational facilities are very meager. Each of these factors may be expected to restrict social participation otherwise than in respect to formal education. Limited schooling may in turn contribute to the continuance of poverty, race prejudice, and poor schools for the next generation. We seem to have here a vicious circle. Hence, it is very difficult to secure data as to the effects of education as such. However, in this chapter, we shall present such evidence as we have to show whether persons with varying amounts of formal schooling display corresponding variations in social participation.

Before the more systematic discussion, we offer two cases in which limited schooling is associated with very different experiences. First, we have a letter written by a Jewish immigrant woman. Her relative isolation probably involved other cultural

factors than formal education. The second is the story of a man who rose to power and influence despite the initial handicaps of limited schooling, ill-health, and poverty. We do not pretend to account for the differences between these two cases nor to say how representative either may be.

### An Unschooled Jewish Immigrant

I have a nice home, fine clothes, a good husband, and yet all this cannot satisfy me. The reason is that I am uneducated; also my husband, who is even more ignorant than myself. He cannot even write Jewish nor speak properly to anybody. You may, then, picture my anguish!

We live in a very rich neighborhood, among wealthy, intelligent people. I can keep up with their styles, clothes, and furniture, but not with the English language. My misfortune is still greater because I am a good judge of myself. When my husband or I say something that is not expressed properly, I immediately recognize the error and I imagine everybody smiling. And my pain is still more acute over the fact that we came here as children. My husband was nine years old and I eleven. But very unfortunately there was no law against child labor at that time. Just imagine a nine or eleven year old child working to-day!

I received a little education in Europe up to my tenth year. I know a little of German, Polish, Russian, and—as you see—Jewish. I can also read an English book and write also—though I am spelling defectively. But what troubles me most is speaking. Am somewhat familiar with the street English, but unable to converse with an intelligent person. My husband does not even know that much. He is a very able business man and no more. Owing to his ignorance I have neglected what I did know, for I did not wish to be superior to him. My desire had always been to marry an educated man and learn from him.

Perhaps you can show us a way to educate ourselves. Some may regard this as folly and remark that I am too comfortable and do not know what I want. My husband is unconcerned, but I am dejected and feel inferior even to the one I am superior to. I must add that we have been married twelve years, have three children. But I am so young—only twenty-nine.[1]

[1] Robert E. Park, and Herbert A. Miller, *Old World Traits Transplanted* (1921), pp. 52–3. By permission of the Carnegie Corporation.

### Frank Hague—Unschooled but Powerful

Frank Hague was born January 17, 1876, in a tumble-down frame house in Jersey City's second ward, a district known as the Horseshoe and the most impoverished section of an industrial town where poverty was a commonplace. As are a majority of Jersey City residents today, he was of Irish stock. His father, John D. Hague, was a night watchman in a bank, a man without political aspiration but subject to typical Hibernic fascination by the subtleties of municipal government.

As a baby, Frank was sickly. His mother, a Jersey City girl who had been born Margaret Fagan, used to carry him daily, on a pillow, around the corner to the free clinic at St. Francis Hospital, for treatment. Hague's knowledge of this no doubt explains the Jersey City medical center and his indirect reply to a critic who thought the appointments of its wards perhaps a trifle—well—luxurious. "It is bad enough to be poor," said the Mayor, "but to be poor and sick at the same time is just hell!"

Growing up, Frank Hague gravitated inevitably into one of the neighborhood gangs which used to pilfer from freight cars in the railroad yards and engage in sanguinary conflict with the Hillies, a contingent of slightly higher-class hoodlums from the town's upland areas, who would swarm down on the meadows to fight. Today, those of the Mayor's associates who remember him from that time recall that he was a leader in these engagements.

This was a tough school. Years later he recalled its lessons to 2,500 inmates of the Rahway Reformatory, in an effort to persuade them to fill out a questionnaire designed to supply information on the causes of juvenile delinquency. He said: "A lot of you are probably suspicious of anything a public official says, and I don't blame you a damn bit. You've been kicked around plenty. You got into trouble when you were kids and yet you didn't do anything worse than I did. I grew up in a tough part of Jersey City, and most of my friends swiped things out of freight cars, and by the time I was twelve I had played hooky so often I was kicked out of school." The Mayor may have laid it on a bit for his audience, but at any rate even the emasculated pages of an "official biographical sketch" remark his "inherent aversion to study" and the fact that he quit Public School 21 as soon as he reached working age.

A gangling, blue-eyed lad who stood six feet and was handy with his

fists, young Hague, still in his early teens, got a job as a blacksmith's helper. His entrance into the ranks of the wage earners was greeted with relief by parents to whom the support of a large family (Frank was one of eight children, only three of whom are still living) was an unending struggle. After a year or so at anvil and forge, the boy graduated to a slightly better job ("playing nursemaid to locomotives," he has termed it since) in the Erie Railroad yards.

He had heard his father's stories of William McAvoy, Democratic boss of Jersey City and Hudson County in the late '70's and '80's, and he had watched the career of Denis McLaughlin, McAvoy's successor, with critical interest. Presently his faculty for gang leadership began to manifest itself in the rough-and-tumble political school of the Horseshoe. So assiduously did he devote himself to this infinitely more attractive form of study that in 1895, two years before he was eligible to vote, the second ward elected him constable. The post carried no salary, to be sure, but it was such conclusive proof of a following that Bob Davis, who had taken over the reins in Hudson, found Hague a court job paying $25 a week. With that, the die was cast. Frank Hague was through with the Erie yards, through with all menial toil, forever.

The years which followed brought him a variety of jobs. For a while he was sergeant at arms of the Assembly, next deputy sheriff, then city-hall custodian. His first elective office was to be a member of the Street and Water Board, the next Commissioner of Public Safety. Since 1917, he has been Mayor of Jersey City. More recently, he has also been Vice-Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and widely heralded as "boss" of New Jersey.[2]

In citing these two cases, we should make it clear once more that throughout this book we are not imputing virtue to those whose degree of social participation is high nor are we condemning those who are relatively isolated. Night watchmen, sheepherders, and scientists buried in their laboratories are limited in their social contacts and group memberships, while men about town, gamblers, and society women have a wide range of contacts and affiliations. Doubtless many persons would unite in calling the Jewish immi-

[2] Sutherland Denlinger, "Boss Hague," *Forum*, 99 (1938), 132. By permission of *The Forum*.

grant woman a worthy but unfortunate soul, while they would heartily condemn the political boss. However, these comments should not obscure the hypothesis that personal adjustment and vigorous group life alike call for at least a minimum of social participation—a minimum still to be determined.

*Measures of Formal Education.* It is obvious that we have no measures of the total amount of information and training possessed by the American people, but we do have rather accurate measures of the amount of formal education or schooling attained and in process. Both the Bureau of the Census and the Office of Education provide data which serve our purpose in this connection. Table 49 shows that, according to the best estimates, less than three per

Table 49

ESTIMATED COMPLETED SCHOOLING OF POPULATION 21 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, 1934 [a]

| *School Level Reached* | *Estimated Number* | *Per Cent of Adult Population* |
|---|---|---|
| College graduates | 2,204,000 | 2.9 |
| Some college work | 3,069,000 | 4.1 |
| High-school graduates only | 5,153,000 | 6.8 |
| Some high-school work | 14,285,000 | 19.0 |
| Elementary-school graduates only | 14,049,000 | 18.7 |
| Some elementary-school work | 32,781,000 | 43.6 |
| Illiterates | 3,675,000 | 4.9 |
| | | 100.0 |

[a] *Biennial Survey of Education, 1933–34* (U. S. Office of Education), chap. 1, p. 14.

cent of our adults are college graduates, but, at the other extreme, less than five per cent are illiterates. Still more important, two thirds of the adult population of the United States have never gone beyond

elementary school. However, the number who complete high school and the number who finish college have been steadily increasing for nearly half a century.[3] In 1890, there were less than 45,000 persons graduating from high school and less than 15,000 graduating from college. In 1934, the corresponding figures were over 900,000 and nearly 140,000. Thus in forty-five years, the size of high-school graduating classes increased twentyfold, and of college graduating classes tenfold.

Table 50 shows the number enrolled in school during a given

Table 50

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, 1933–1934 [a]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Elementary schools | 23,262,000 | |
| High schools (last 4 years) | 6,096,000 | |
| Colleges, etc. | 1,055,000 | |
| Total full time | | 30,413,000 |
| Evening schools | 932,000 | |
| Continuation schools, etc. | 274,000 | |
| Extension and correspondence courses | 254,000 | |
| Total part time | | 1,460,000 |
| Grand total | | 31,873,000 |

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

year. Nearly 32,000,000 persons of various ages were enrolled in public and private, elementary, secondary, vocational, and collegiate institutions in 1933–1934. They constituted nearly one fourth of the total population of the United States. This ratio has not changed much in sixty years, but the percentage of children between the ages of five and seventeen who were enrolled in school grew from 61.5 per cent in 1870–1871 to 81.6 in 1933–1934. This apparent discrepancy is due to the aging of the population. Those

[3] *Biennial Survey of Education, 1933–34* (U. S. Office of Education), chap 1, p. 8.

of school age are more regularly enrolled than they were even a quarter of a century ago. School attendance also has been increasing, until, in 1934, absences averaged only 15 per cent for the whole country, ranging from 26 per cent in Mississippi to five per cent in New Mexico. The length of the school term has likewise been lengthened from 130 days sixty years ago to 171.6 days in 1934. Table 51 shows the survival of pupils from the fifth grade to

Table 51

SURVIVAL OF PUPILS IN SCHOOL[a]

| | *Pupils Remaining* |
|---|---|
| Elementary school | |
| Grade 5 | 1,000 |
| 6 | 919 |
| 7 | 824 |
| 8 | 754 |
| High School | |
| Year 1 | 677 |
| 2 | 552 |
| 3 | 453 |
| 4 | 400 |
| Graduates (1934) | 333 |
| College graduates (estimated) | 52 |

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

the end of a high-school course, based on the class graduating from high school in 1934.

Actual illiteracy is gradually vanishing from the United States, but many people who are reported able to read and write are so limited in their mastery of both arts that their capacity to use newspapers and carry on correspondence is negligible. Nevertheless, it is probably fair to consider the percentages of persons reported illiterate to vary with the percentages actually incapable of read-

ing and writing. The steady decline in formal illiteracy, from 20.0 per cent in 1870 to 4.3 per cent in 1930, doubtless represents a decline in functional illiteracy.

As we pointed out in Chapter 1, school attendance is itself a form of social participation. Our problem in this chapter is to determine the extent to which other forms of social participation vary with school attendance.

*Education and Economic Status.* Common observation is to the effect that people with considerable education usually have good incomes and possessions. But even the man on the street knows that the association of schooling and earning is not perfect. Brokers, realtors, advertisers, and salesmen without college degrees have been known to boast of their economic superiority to Ph.D's. On the other hand, it is generally conceded that persons with a fourth-grade education are not, on the average, as well off financially as those who go through high school.

Fortunately, we do not have to depend on casual impressions. Numerous studies have been made of this problem. On the whole, they lend strong support to the proposition that "the schools are giving their pupils a greater earning power than even the strongest advocator of education had claimed." [4] But most of them are subject to the criticism that they do not isolate the influence of schooling from that of other factors such as native intelligence, social status of parents, occupation, health, and luck. Two studies seem to have been fairly successful in controlling these variables and in identifying a positive relationship between formal education and income.

In one study,[5] the method of procedure was this. From many different communities of Indiana, 185 pairs of brothers were se-

[4] A. Caswell Ellis, *The Money Value of Education* (U. S. Bureau of Education Bulletin No. 22 [1917]), p. 44.

[5] D. E. Gorseline, *The Effect of Schooling Upon Income* (1932). By permission of Indiana University.

lected for comparison. From each man, information was secured concerning his school achievement (highest grade completed) and his income for a given year. To determine the possible influence of other factors, the questionnaires also asked about age, school marks, rating on standardized tests, occupation, residence, marriage, children, inheritances, health, and luck. The brothers were compared first as to education—one being assigned to the "most-schooling" class, the other to the "least-schooling" class. On the average, the two classes were found to differ by 3.45 grades. This difference was shown to be statistically significant. Then the two classes were compared on each of the points mentioned. The average income of the "most-schooling" class was $2,770, and of the "least-schooling" class $2,130. In 139 of the 185 pairs, the brother with more schooling had a larger income than the brother with less schooling. The same kind of difference obtained when comparison was restricted to brothers engaged in the same occupation. By various devices, these differences were shown to be reliable.

Now as to the other factors. Differences in age were slight and of little significance. Men in the "most-schooling" class had slightly higher marks and slightly higher test scores. However, too few records were available to warrant conclusions as to relative ability. There were some differences in dominant occupations of the two classes: trade, manufacturing, and agriculture were most frequent in the "least-schooling" class; professional service was by far the most frequent in the "most-schooling" class. These differences in occupation are probably directly related to differences in formal education. From the study of residences, nothing significant emerged. In more than half of the instances, brothers lived in the same community. Neither were there significant differences in the frequency of marriage and parenthood. Inheritances received by men in the two classes differed very little. They were also very much alike in losses and gains attributed to luck and ill-health. Hence, it seems reasonable to hold that differences in incomes were

attributable mainly to differences in schooling. In other words, this study of a small, but carefully chosen, sample indicates that formal education does on the average affect income.

A second study [6] dealt with all the boys and girls who left St. Paul high schools in 1926. Of these, 1,130 graduated and 997 dropped out. Nine years later, 671 of the graduates and 523 of the dropouts were located in an effort to discover whether there was any difference in their economic success. In order to eliminate the differences which might be due to age, sex, intelligence quotient, nationality, neighborhood, and family status, the numbers were further reduced by matching graduates with dropouts for nationality of parents, and sex, and further selecting them so as to secure the same distribution of the other four factors in each group. With these controls, it was found that only 11.3 per cent of the graduates suffered salary decreases during the nine years, whereas 16.6 per cent of the dropouts experienced cuts. The difference was small, so the sample was again reduced by matching graduates and dropouts for all six factors. With these controls, more decisive results were secured. Of the graduates, 92 per cent had salary increases or no changes, only 8 per cent being cut; while among the dropouts, 42 per cent experienced salary cuts. The final sample was very small, only 46, but the "experimental" and the "control" groups were so carefully matched and the difference in economic success was so great that we are inclined to attach some importance to the findings.

Even with such careful work before us as that of Gorseline and Christiansen, we wonder whether economic status may not be as often cause as effect of formal education, and whether both are not part of a cultural complex not easily analyzed. An ecological study

[6] Helen F. Christiansen, "The Relation of School Progress, Measured in Terms of the Total Amount of School Attendance or Course Completion, to Subsequent Economic Adjustment" (unpublished master's thesis, University of Minnesota [1938]), summarized by F. Stuart Chapin in *American Sociological Review*, 3 (1938), 788–94.

of New York City "neighborhoods" revealed a high correlation between economic status and school progress.[7] In any case, further studies of this problem are needed. Perhaps they may show a positive relationship between income and schooling up to a certain point such as completion of junior college. Thereafter, it may appear that further schooling bears no relation to income. This, of course, we do not know.

The sociological significance of income has been set forth in previous chapters and does not need to be discussed here. We shall only repeat that money is the open sesame to many groups and cultural activities. It enables the holder to pay dues, to dress appropriately, and to bear the cost of activities from which he would otherwise be debarred.

*Schooling and Marriage.* Popular impressions are to the effect that persons with limited schooling are more likely to marry and have more children than those who linger longer in the academic world. Indeed women's colleges have been charged with being "spinster factories." What are the facts? General information is not available, but Folsom has studied samples from five women's colleges and two coeducational institutions over varying periods of time.[8] He shows that in each age class each group of alumnae has a smaller percentage married than does the general population of women. Other studies display corresponding results. Similar methods applied to college men indicate higher marriage rates than for college women, but lower rates than for the general male population.[9] Unfortunately, we have been unable to find data concerning the marriage rates of persons with elementary- and high-school educations. Hence we do not know whether there is a consistently inverse relation between the amount of schooling and the proba-

[7] J. B. Maller, "Economic and Social Correlatives of School Progress in New York City," *Teachers College Record*, 34 (1933), 655–70.

[8] Joseph K. Folsom, *The Family* (1934), p. 334.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 337.

bility of marriage. Our hypothesis is that, in general, this is the case.

Assuming that people with limited schooling are more likely to marry than those who receive more formal education, what are the possible reasons? Again our data are limited, and we can only present hypotheses which may later prove to be incorrect. However, we do know that men who enter the professions are usually forced to postpone, if not to forego, marriage because of the long, expensive period of training. Even after graduation, they may have a long struggle to become established. Women who go far in formal education doubtless have many desires other than, or in addition to, marriage. On the other hand, coeducational schools and colleges provide opportunities for members of the two sexes to become acquainted, and many a campus romance eventuates in marriage. In general, opportunities to meet members of the opposite sex seem to be more closely associated with occupation than with schooling. But since schooling partly determines occupation, there may prove to be some correlation here. Thus, girls who end their formal education with high school or earlier commonly engage in sales and clerical work, whereby they make many contacts with men. On the other hand, those who enter domestic and personal service are notoriously restricted in their opportunities for meeting eligible males. Obviously we are dealing with a problem concerning which more research is needed before we are justified in forming definite opinions.

Family life involves not merely marriage, but also for most couples the rearing of children. Fortunately, we do have some data concerning the relation between schooling and birth rate. Folsom has summarized the results of several studies which show fairly conclusively that the correlation is negative.[10] In other words, persons with limited formal education tend to have larger families

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 254.

than those with more schooling. Baber and Ross made a study of 2,500 persons whose families were completed.[11] They found that on each successive educational level the ratio of births to married women decreased. Every 100 women with elementary education had 349 children; 100 women with high-school education had 267; 100 with college education had 251. Thus, quantitatively it appears that higher education is negatively associated with family life.

Let us see what, if anything, is known about the quality of participation in family groups. A few studies have been made of factors associated with marital adjustment or "success in marriage." Thus, Kirkpatrick compared 104 married couples rated by their friends as well adjusted with 70 couples similarly rated as poorly adjusted.[12] His finding from this sample was that "marital adjustment is unrelated to educational status, at least when averages are considered." However, he found that differences in the amount of schooling received by husband and wife may be significant. Jessie Bernard studied 252 individuals to measure the degree of marital satisfaction and other factors.[13] She reported that "correlation failed to reveal any connection between score on the instrument and number of years of education." Burgess and Cottrell, however, did find some evidence of a positive correlation between marriage-adjustment score and educational level attained.[14] Their sample consisted of 526 Illinois couples married not less than one nor more than six years. Most of them were well above average in the amount of schooling. Very high adjustment scores were most frequent among those who had taken graduate work, least frequent among those who had not gone beyond elementary school. Very

[11] Ray E. Baber and E. A. Ross, *Changes in the Size of American Families in One Generation* (1924). Quoted by Folsom, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

[12] Clifford Kirkpatrick, "Factors in Marital Adjustment," *American Journal of Sociology*, 43 (1937), 270–83.

[13] Jessie Bernard, "Factors in the Distribution of Success in Marriage," *American Journal of Sociology*, 40 (1934), 49–60.

[14] Ernest W. Burgess and Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., "The Prediction of Adjustment in Marriage," *American Sociological Review*, 1 (1936), 737–51.

low scores were most frequent among those who had attended grade school only, least frequent among those who had taken graduate work. The net result of the three studies is continued uncertainty. But despite their conflicting findings and small samples, we have introduced them for clarification of the problem and the methods they suggest. Perhaps someday work along these lines will justify definite conclusions concerning the relationship between formal education and participation in family life. Meanwhile we can only offer the hypothesis that the kind of education is more important than the amount.

*Interest Groups and Cultural Activities.* It is easy to suppose that persons with a considerable amount of schooling are apt to belong to many interest groups and to engage in many cultural activities. Presumably they are asked to join many organizations and to assume positions of leadership. Presumably they are ready to take advantage of opportunities to enjoy music, drama, painting, literature, philosophy, and religion. Presumably they are prepared to engage in forensics, music, sports, and civic activities of many kinds.

Table 52

AMOUNT OF FORMAL EDUCATION AND EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES, FOUR ILLINOIS TOWNSHIPS [a]

| Group | Number of persons | PERSONS PARTICIPATING Per cent | | | | Persons not participating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | As officers | As committee or board members | By paying dues | By taking part in program | |
| Less than eighth grade | 238 | 5.9 | 4.6 | 44.1 | 12.6 | 40.8 |
| Eighth grade but less than high-school graduation | 85 | 16.5 | 15.3 | 61.2 | 29.4 | 27.0 |
| High-school graduation or better | 83 | 30.1 | 15.6 | 77.1 | 42.1 | 10.8 |

[a] D. E. Lindstrom, *Forces Affecting Participation of Farm People in Rural Organization* (University of Illinois Bulletin 423 [1936]), p. 111.

But it is not enough to guess that these things are true. We need to find evidence that our hunches are sound.

Apparently more work on this problem has been done in rural than in urban America. Table 52 presents the results of a study in four Illinois townships. Table 53 reports, in somewhat different

Table 53

AMOUNT OF FORMAL EDUCATION AND HOURS OF PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS, ONE UTAH COMMUNITY [a]

| *Education* | *No. Persons in Community* | *Avg. Participation (hours per month)* |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 8 grades | 381 | 8.97 |
| Completed 8 grades | 114 | 7.36 |
| Some high school | 215 | 12.77 |
| Finished high school | 12 | 13.68 |
| Some college | 37 | 10.89 |
| Finished college | 3 | 9.83 |

[a] Joseph A. Geddes, *Farm versus Village Living in Utah* (Utah State Agricultural College Bulletin 269 [1936]).

fashion, the findings in a Utah community. In both instances, the samples are small, but the results are very interesting. In the Illinois townships, participation plainly increased with the amount of schooling. In the Utah community, it was highest for persons who finished high school but did not go to college. It was higher for those who went to high school than for those whose schooling ended with the elementary grades. Curiously, those who completed eight grades ranked lower than those with a smaller amount of formal education. Perhaps the discrepancy between the results of the two studies may be due to the different measures used, perhaps to the different cultural setting, perhaps to the small number of per-

sons involved. In any case, the need of further research is obvious.

If we may return for a moment to the realm of speculation, we will venture the guess that differences in participation in interest groups are greater in cities than in the country. But whether these supposed differences are more highly correlated with schooling or with income, we have no idea. Often uneducated people do not feel at home in churches where educated folk predominate. But they may find plenty of association and other satisfaction in religious groups of their own kind. They may not find admission to fraternal orders, but may secure an equivalent experience in trade-unions. They may not sit on city or state central committees, but they are always welcome in ward organizations of political parties.

As to cultural activities, we will not even hazard a guess concerning the possible correlations with schooling in city and in country. Uneducated folk may not understand symphonies, grand opera, art exhibits. Yet who knows how much pleasure they may derive from these? We have sometimes observed more intent listening and more enthusiastic response in the top gallery than in the boxes. People with much and with little schooling may be equally at home at the ball park, on the golf course, at the movies, at the zoo, in the dance hall, or listening to the radio. Neither class may mingle much with the other, but each may be very happy within its own circle.

*Delinquency and Education.* It is sometimes held that delinquency is a measure of limited participation in a culture; i. e., the people who conform to the mores and laws are considered fully acculturated, while those who deviate and transgress are not. Certainly it would be absurd to ignore the social relations among delinquents and between them and law-abiding folk, but it is reasonable to suppose that, in general, offenders are excluded from many groups and that their nonconformity is an expression of previous exclusion from some associations and cultural opportunities. On the

basis of this assumption, we shall proceed to examine some data pertaining to the possible relations between formal education and identified delinquency.

Sutherland has presented some evidence that there is a negative relation between the amount of schooling and the probability of commitment to a penal institution.[15] Thus, in 1923, he reported that 10.7 per cent of prisoners between 15 and 35 years of age were illiterate, while this was true of only 4.6 per cent of the general population of the same age class. Per million persons over 21 years of age, there were committed to prison 428 illiterates, 314 persons with elementary education, 175 with high-school education, and 143 who had gone to college. Gillin has gathered data from England, Austria, and France, which indicate that there is a negative relation between schooling and crime.[16] Phelps assembled reports of juvenile delinquents in American institutions, which seem to show that a disproportionate number had never got beyond the elementary school.[17] The figure he gave was 92 per cent, which may perhaps be compared with 67 per cent of the general population mentioned earlier in this chapter. We are not sure that this comparison is legitimate, for Phelps does not tell us what ages were included. But we have no doubt of the relative difference between the amount of schooling received by inmates of industrial schools and reformatories and the amount of schooling received by the general population of the same age classes.

Once again, we are dealing with crude and inadequate data. It is almost, if not quite, impossible to disentangle schooling as a factor from the complex which includes native intelligence, economic status, mobility, and other factors. Just how much weight should be given to each of these, we are not now able to state. It is likely that education affects the kind of offense committed rather than de-

[15] E. H. Sutherland, *Principles of Criminology* (1934), p. 177.
[16] John L. Gillin, *Criminology and Penology* (1926), p. 219.
[17] Harold A. Phelps, *Contemporary Social Problems* (1938), p. 643.

linquency in general. Thus, embezzlement, forgery, and fraud are crimes of educated persons; rape, assault, and homicide are usually the crimes of persons with little schooling. Nevertheless, despite all the qualifications that must be offered, there does appear to be a negative relation between the amount of formal education and delinquency.

*Summary.* In preceding chapters, we have treated school attendance as itself a form of social participation. To this position, we still adhere, but, in this chapter, we have sought to present evidence as to the relations between school attendance and other forms of social participation. We have considered it in relation to economic activities, family life, interest groups, general cultural opportunities and activities, and delinquency. Unfortunately, the data are far from adequate in all these fields. But we have found indications that there is a positive relation between schooling and income, occupation, and membership and activity in interest groups. There are indications of a negative relation between schooling and participation in family life and delinquency. Further research may or may not support these tentative findings. In general, our initial impressions have been strengthened by the studies we have reviewed.

## Suggested Readings

Chapin, F. Stuart, "Design for Social Experiments," *American Sociological Review*, 3 (1938), 786–800. Describes a comparative study of high-school graduates and dropouts, showing economic advantage of the former.

Folsom, Joseph K., *The Family*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1934, pp. 316–42. Reports studies of the relation of formal education to marriage.

Gorseline, Donald E., *The Effect of Schooling Upon Income*. Bloomington: Indiana University, 1932. A study of the relation of formal schooling to the incomes of 185 pairs of brothers.

Healy, William, and Bronner, Augusta F., "How Does the School Produce or Prevent Delinquency?" *Journal of Educational Sociology*, 6

(1933), 450–70. A consideration of ways in which schools may influence the conduct of youth.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Each student select two persons, preferably brothers or sisters, whose schooling differs considerably in amount. If practicable, give them Chapin's "Social Participation Scale." If not, record as many facts as possible about their group and cultural activities. Compare as many pairs as possible. Compare statistically the two classes: (1) that made up of the persons with *more* schooling than the other siblings studied, and (2) that made up of the siblings with the *smaller* amounts of schooling.

2. From the local board of education or superintendent of schools, secure data comparable to those in Table 51 of this text. Is the local showing as to survival in school better or worse than that of the country as a whole?

3. From the state superintendent of public instruction, secure available data (bulletins, reports, press releases) concerning school enrollment, advancement and retardation, grades completed. Make a colored map of the state based on the percentage of all pupils who are enrolled in high school.

4. From the state college of agriculture secure data as to membership in 4-H Clubs. From the nearest center, secure similar data for Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boy Scouts, Camp Fire, and other organizations for young people. Compute the total membership in such organizations for each county. Make a colored map of the state based on the percentage of young people (aged 10 to 19) who are members of these organizations. Compare this map with the one indicating high-school enrollment. Are some counties high in both while others are low in both?

5. Examine some of the maps in Odum, *Southern Regions of the United States*, e. g., those comparing states according to education and wealth (p. 98), illiteracy and church membership (pp. 104, 140, 144), high-school enrollment and public libraries (pp. 100, 118), public education and postal receipts (pp. 172, 174). What conclusions may be drawn from the fact that states high in illiteracy are also high in church membership? From the fact that states poor in education are also poor in libraries and in use of the mails?

6. Examine maps in works dealing with various cities. (See chap. 12, project 11, or Stuart A. Queen and Lewis F. Thomas, *The City*, p. 270.)

Compare various parts of the city according to education and other measures of social participation. (See *American Sociological Review*, 2 [1937], 187–94.) Since schooling and economic status usually vary in the same direction, it is difficult to know what to infer concerning the influence of each on social participation of the inhabitants of an area.

7. Examine civil-service requirements for state and Federal positions and make a chart noting the educational requirements for specific jobs. If possible, classify the jobs by skills required and by salary offered and note if there is any correlation between salary and education, skill and education. (This might show that education or lack of it is a definite handicap to certain jobs.)

8. Assemble a bibliography on educational facilities in the several states, together with data which might throw light on reasons for differences.

9. Analyze educational achievements of persons mentioned in *Who's Who in America*. Contrast or compare those with college education and those without.

# *Chapter 16*

# RACE PREJUDICE: AMERICAN NEGROES

THERE are many white people in the United States who are firmly convinced of the inherent inferiority of Negroes, Orientals, Indians, Jews, and other ethnic groups commonly called "races." On the basis of this belief, and the accompanying feelings, they join in denying to these minority peoples various opportunities for social contacts and cultural participation. So sharply has the line been drawn that many members of these ethnic groups have had no real chance to demonstrate what capacities they do possess. Social barriers prevent achievement, and lack of achievement constitutes a new barrier. The life of Booker T. Washington illustrates some of the obstacles that keep Negroes from sharing fully in American life. It displays also a large measure of white recognition for a black man, a great contribution to the cultural development of Negroes, and the effective promotion of interracial cooperation.

## Booker T. Washington [1]

Booker T. Washington was born a slave on a large plantation in Virginia, probably in April, 1856. His father is not known, but is believed to have been a white man who lived in the vicinity. At all events, there is no record of his having shown any interest in the mulatto son. With his mother, brother, and sister, Booker Washington lived in a one-room cabin without wooden floor or glass windows. Furniture was very mea-

[1] This account is based largely on *Up From Slavery*, Booker T. Washington's autobiography (copyright 1901, 1929, by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.), and Anson Phelps Stokes, *A Brief Biography of Booker Washington* (1936). By permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., and Hampton Institute.

ger. Mr. Washington later said that he could not remember having slept in a bed until he was seven years old. As to food, "it was a piece of bread here and a scrap of meat there." Regular meals served at a table were unknown. When other breakfast failed, the boy went out where the cows and pigs were fed to share their boiled corn. Dress was also meager, the boy's principal garment being a rough flax shirt. Toward the white master, there was no bitterness, although there was an earnest hope for freedom.

Soon after emancipation, the family moved to West Virginia. Its few belongings were taken in a cart, but the children walked most of the way. The stepfather found work in salt furnaces. The mother got hold of Webster's "blue-back" spelling book, and the boy's education began. He worked by day and studied at night under the guidance of a colored teacher. Later he attended school, working several hours a day before and after classes. While digging coal, he heard about Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia and determined to get there somehow. Meantime he found employment with a white family, which enabled him to save a little money and to do some more studying. Most important of all, his mistress taught him to be clean, orderly, systematic, thorough, and honest.

In the fall of 1872, Booker Washington set out for Hampton, arriving with only fifty cents in his pocket. His entrance examination consisted in sweeping and dusting a classroom. This he did so thoroughly that he was admitted as a student. A Northern friend of the principal paid his tuition. His board and incidental expenses he earned by janitor work and odd jobs. At Hampton, Booker Washington learned the trade of brickmason, came to know cultured people, and acquired the habits associated with regular meals, tablecloth, toothbrush, bathtub, bed linen, and so on. He graduated in 1875.

On leaving Hampton, he worked in a summer hotel, then returned to his home in West Virginia as schoolteacher. Here he worked from early in the morning till late at night. Besides the day school, he taught night classes, established a small reading room, started a debating society, and taught two Sunday schools. After two years of this, followed by one at a seminary in Washington, D.C., he was called back to Hampton as a sort of "house father" for about seventy-five Indian students. He also took charge of the night school and became secretary to the principal.

In 1881, efforts were being made to start a Negro Normal School in

Tuskegee, Alabama. A prominent white citizen and an ex-slave joined in addressing General Armstrong, the principal of Hampton Institute, asking him to recommend someone to head the new school. As a result of the correspondence, Booker Washington undertook the venture. The legislature had appropriated $2,000 for instructors' salaries, but there was no provision for land, building, or equipment. Work was begun in a rather dilapidated shanty near the colored Methodist Church, the latter being used as an assembly hall. About three months after the school opened, an abandoned plantation of 100 acres was offered for sale at $500. Mr. Washington borrowed $250 for the initial payment, and soon the school was moved. The "big house" had burned, so the stable and henhouse were used for classrooms. Both teachers and students helped to renovate buildings and clear the land. Thus was started an institution which Booker Washington headed for over thirty years and which, under his leadership, developed into one of the best-known industrial schools in the world.

When he died in 1915, Tuskegee Institute had become a really great institution—2,000 acres of land, 100 buildings, 1,500 students, 200 teachers, an endowment of $2,000,000, training in 38 trades and professions. But more than that, it had won favor in the eyes of both races. In 1881, many white people had looked upon the project with misgiving. They had in their minds, said Mr. Washington, "pictures of what was called an educated Negro, with a high hat, imitation gold eye-glasses, a showy walking-stick, kid gloves, fancy boots, and what not." They feared the loss of agricultural and domestic workers and the rise of a troublesome parasitic class of black men. But with the passing of time, these attitudes changed. At the twenty-fifth anniversary of Tuskegee's founding, addresses were made by the Secretary of War, the Governor of Alabama, the President of Harvard University, and a famous industrialist.

One secret of this success lay in the fact that the educational program was always kept close to the life of the people, the rural Negroes of the black belt. Mr. Washington went about the South eating and sleeping with the humble black folk in their little cabins. He found them desperately poor and ignorant, miserably clad, malnourished, unclean, in debt, limited in social contacts, and untouched by many phases of our culture. Schools were often held in miserable frame shacks or log cabins, lacking blackboards, desks, and sometimes books. The teachers were poorly trained. The school term ran from three to five months. Often there was none at all. The churches were quite as crude as the schools. Leisure-time activities con-

sisted in loafing on the streets of the nearest town all day Saturday and attending some "big meeting" on Sunday. To remove these limitations, Booker Washington chose the way of self-help rather than the way of demanding rights. So firmly did he adhere to this philosophy and program that some of his fellow Negroes accused him of playing up to the whites.

Perhaps the best statement of his personal philosophy and the finest recognition Mr. Washington ever received occurred in connection with the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta in 1895. As he put it, "This was the first time in the entire history of the Negro that a member of my race had been asked to speak from the same platform with white Southern men and women on any important National occasion. . . . Not a few of the Southern white papers were unfriendly to the idea of my speaking." He advised Negroes to make the most of opportunities about them. "It is important and right that all the privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges." He urged white people to avail themselves of the potential contribution of Negroes instead of counting on immigration to build up the South. "Draw on the eight millions of Negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested . . . who have tilled your fields, cleared your forests, built your railroads and cities." He held the future of the two races to be bound inextricably together. Prosperity, health, law, and order must come to both or to neither. "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." Newspapers in all parts of the country published this address in full. The President of the United States wrote Mr. Washington a letter of congratulation.

Despite the efforts of Booker Washington and of many other eminent Negroes, race prejudice continues to be an active force in American life. Three illustrations are offered showing difficulty in securing employment, education, and participation in civic movements.

### A Negro Seeks Employment

A young woman, a graduate of the commercial department of the high school in a large New England city, took an additional postgraduate course in shorthand and typewriting. She is a native of the city and a member of one of its most respected colored families. Shortly after her gradua-

tion, she applied, in response to an advertisement in a local paper, for office work with a large commercial corporation, and received from one of the department heads a request to call in person as soon as possible. She was directed to a room where scores of young women were engaged in work similar to that for which she had applied. Her appearance in this room created evident surprise and excited a ripple of subdued laughter. The surprise of the young women was exceeded by that of their chief when she learned that this Negro girl was the one whom she had invited for a conference regarding work. But in spite of that invitation, the caller was told that the place had been filled.

Two months later, there appeared in a local paper an advertisement by the same company for a woman to do clerical work, but this time in another department. Again the colored girl wrote her application and mailed it at once to the head of the department. On this occasion, she gave her residence telephone number as well as the street address. On the following day, she had a telephone message from the department head who, after asking a few questions, requested her to call and see him next morning.

At the designated hour, she appeared at his desk. After questioning her as to her fitness, he found himself unable to give a decisive answer, but assured her that he would give her application serious consideration shortly. While the decision was pending, it occurred to the young woman that a good word spoken in her behalf by someone whose influence might have weight would not be amiss at this juncture. She accordingly sought and secured the intercession of two such persons. One of these went so far as to lay her case before the vice-president of the company, who is reputed to be a man of generous impulses and a firm believer in a square deal. Having listened attentively to the facts, this official promised to investigate the matter and see what could be done. He did so, and within a week the intercessor received from him a letter in which he said: "I have talked with Mr. —— in regard to the employment of the young woman you spoke to me about, and find that while his sympathy is in favor of doing so, yet on conferring with his employees, he is convinced that the exigencies of the service will not allow him to act as he really wishes to act. We all regret the circumstances very much." And with this the incident closed.

Her next experience was with a publishing house whose advertisement in a local paper she answered after the manner already described. The

manager of the firm replied, asking her to call the following morning. When the applicant went to the house and, following directions, ascended the long stairway to a room above, she again found herself in the presence of scores of young women of the more favored race, and with exactly the same humiliating experience as before. But, on this occasion, her feelings suffered even more, for among the young women who ridiculed her presumption were those who had been her classmates in the high school. In the business manager of this company, who soon faced her, she met with an honesty which had been sadly lacking in all the others to whom she had applied. He frankly told her that he could not consider her application on account of her color.

Not quite hopeless, but thoroughly discouraged, she now abandoned the search for clerical work—the kind for which she had spent four years in special preparation—and rather than accept the alternative of leaving home, decided to see what the chances were in other lines of employment outside of domestic service. She then applied for work in a large department store where her name was filed away for future reference; in a confectionery manufactory, in the office window of which was the conspicuous placard, GIRLS WANTED, but where she was told that only girls experienced in the manufacture of candy could be employed; and then in a dozen other places, where help was "wanted"—in each and every instance to be turned away.

### No Votes—No High School

In a city of Oklahoma, in March, 1924, the annual school election was held. A leaflet published by a committee of the high school for white children stated that "any person qualified can vote in this election and does not have to be registered. A citizen of the United States who has lived in Oklahoma one year, in —— County six months, and in the precinct thirty days, can vote. The colored people are not permitted to vote at this election."

Several years before, in this same city, the colored people were induced to vote $80,000 for school purposes, with the understanding that $60,000 would be for a white school and $20,000 for a colored school. After the vote for the appropriation was carried, the entire $80,000 was used to build a white high school and none for the Negro school. Later, two rooms were added to the four rooms of the old building of the Negro school. The population of the two races in the city is about equal. The white chil-

dren now have a four-year accredited high school with twenty-one units; the Negro children none.

### A City Club Excludes a Negro

The city club of a Middle Western city, one of the largest in the country, was afraid it might have to face the color problem when a Negro was recommended for membership. The issue was dodged; the Negro's application was "tactfully withdrawn," "without offense"—so it was alleged. There are hundreds of educated, refined Negroes in that city. The city club has been for many years the most stalwart defender of public rights and public morality; it is a club which people enter, for the most part, to render public service in one way or another and not simply for its social amenities. Yet its members, or some of them, rejoiced in what they looked upon as a "narrow escape" from having to take up the question whether Negroes, qualified by education, professional status, and personal reputation, should be permitted to take part in these efforts.[2]

*Ethnic Groups in the United States.* In 1930, the Bureau of the Census reported 11,900,000 Negroes, 1,400,000 Mexicans, 330,000 Indians, 140,000 Japanese, 75,000 Chinese, 45,000 Filipinos, and several smaller ethnic groups in the continental United States. In addition to these peoples, distinguished to a certain extent by color and other external features, there were several large groups distinguished by language and other culture traits, but reported in terms of birthplace. Among the largest were Italians 1,800,000, Germans 1,600,000, Scandinavians 1,125,000. In addition, there is one very large group not counted separately by the Bureau of the Census, namely, Jews, who were estimated to number 4,200,000.[3] Within the space limits of this chapter, it is not possible to consider each of these separately. Some generalizations appear to be valid for all of them, while in other respects their circumstances differ.

[2] The foregoing stories have been taken from *And Who Is My Neighbor?* The Inquiry (1924), pp. 77–9, 109–10, 171, by permission of the Publication Department of the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States of America.

[3] *American Jewish Year Book*, vol. 30, pp. 101–08.

Hence, we have chosen to present certain general statements, supplemented by a discussion of the largest of these groups, the Negroes.

*Nature and Origins of Race Prejudice.* In discussing race prejudice, it is important to distinguish the biological and the sociological definitions of race. From the biological standpoint, a race is a large body of people, relatively homogeneous as to heritable, nonadaptive features. But instead of sharp lines, there is a great deal of overlapping. Hence, racial types really represent averages about which variation occurs. The shading off of one race into another may be owing in part to having a common origin; it is complicated by interbreeding. There are various criteria of race—head form, hair, skin color, stature, blood group, and so on. But these do not appear in consistent combinations. Hence, it might be well to substitute for the misleading term "race" the colorless phrase "ethnic group."

But this does not mean that the concept of race has ceased to play an important part in human affairs. Many people still *believe* that there are distinct races, with consistently different combinations of physical characteristics, mental capacities, ancestry, and destiny. It is customary for the members of a given ethnic group to *believe* that they are different from and (usually) better than other such groups, that they are descended from a common ancestor or ancestors, and that they have a mission to the world. They build up a mythology of racial separateness, superiority, and destiny, like the current "Aryan" mythology in Germany. Even though it be unfounded in fact, they behave *as if* it were true. They come to hate, or fear, or despise the members of other ethnic groups. If strong, they oppress, harass, and exploit the weaker groups. How has all this come to be?

Whether the so-called races evolved separately from different subhuman ancestors or all emerged from the same ancestral group, they developed apart from each other. In the isolation of their dis-

tinctive environments, variation and natural selection operated to develop somewhat distinctive human types. Close interbreeding, within a local area, produced a homogeneity which might easily be taken as proof of a separate species. Along with this physical differentiation went cultural differentiation. In a given geographic setting, certain topographic features, climatic conditions, and natural resources facilitated the development of certain kinds of food, clothing, and means of transportation, perhaps art and religion, size and quality of groups. When peoples who had thus gone their separate ways for long periods of time came together, they looked upon each other inevitably as strange, often as dangerous. If their contacts were infrequent, if one group was represented by only a few individuals, if they became interested in the exchange of goods or services, they might make a peaceful adjustment to one another. But if they came together in considerable numbers, if one group sought to eliminate or dominate the other, then the differences in physical appearance and in culture became symbols of fear and hatred. The memories of such conflicts live long and are revived by every appearance of these symbols. Even after the immediate threat to security or status is gone, those who bear the hallmark of the other group are treated as enemies. If the struggle has ended in slavery or other form of subjugation, the inferior group may remain bitter, and the victors may fear an uprising. If the two groups have finally become adjusted to the relations of dominance and submission, the superior group probably rationalizes its exploitation of the other as "natural" or "divinely ordered," and thinks little further of the matter unless someone threatens the status quo.

In America, the history of black and white relations is briefly this. Colonial times were marked by the arrival of rather small numbers of Negro slaves directly from Africa. So far as America was concerned, the slave trade rested on no previous racial antipathy; it was purely a business proposition. The presence of slaves was nothing new in the world. These Negroes seemed ugly and uncouth.

Their culture was meager. They were not Christian, and they did not speak English. They could do only unskilled labor. They came as slaves. Over a period of 200 years, the races became accommodated to each other. However, even before the Civil War, there was some tension. Poor whites envied Negroes on account of their security and hated them because of economic competition. Not a few masters hired their slaves out in competition with white laborers. With emancipation came an upheaval. To be sure, the personal relations between many former masters and slaves changed slowly, but there was a great deal of mobility and insecurity. The old masters were impoverished and bitter, the freedmen were destitute, and white workers were poor. During the Reconstruction era, feelings ran high. Out of this confusion came a conscious effort to "keep the Negro in his place." Cultural isolation was continued and emphasized. Negroes were segregated as to residence, education, religion, recreation, transportation, and employment. They were politically disfranchised. These were the methods whereby desperate white men of all classes sought to maintain some degree of status and security, creating a permanent sense of differentiation from the emancipated black men. Then came the migration to cities, and increasing participation in industry. These changes demanded of the Negroes new habits of life; they offered new contacts with white people; they left members of both races wondering what to expect. Negroes took over jobs previously held only by white men; they invaded areas previously occupied only by white residents; they met on streetcars and busses. In the North, they went to the same parks and theaters; their children attended the same schools. Everywhere there was uncertainty as to privileges and obligations. Intermittently conflict broke into the open: Negro homes were bombed, men suspected of crime were lynched, large-scale riots occurred.

Thus, the rise of race prejudice in ethnic groups involves contact in large numbers and strange situations, economic competition,

and some physical differences which can identify members of the opposite camps. Similar in some respects, different in others, is the development of race prejudice in individuals. On first contact with a strange-looking person, there is likely to be an expression of interest or curiosity. If previous experience with other kinds of strangers has been unfortunate, there may be suspicion or fear. But usually there is accommodation and acceptance of physical differences. Thus, young children play freely with familiar members of other ethnic groups. But as they grow older, they observe marks of social distance. For example, white children note that Negroes usually hold menial positions, use rear entrances, eat in the kitchen, are addressed by first names, kowtow to white people, and are the butts of white people's jokes. So they come gradually to accept the adult attitudes thus displayed. Thus, the young members of the numerically superior group acquire the attitudes of domination and derision, while those of the minority group acquire attitudes of submission, fear, and resentment. Sometimes these ideas and feelings are taught deliberately, but usually they are passed along by innuendo, avoidance, and perhaps abuse. If there comes into the life of an individual some dramatic experience in which he or another member of his group is threatened or injured by a member of the opposite group, the conventional attitudes are strongly reinforced. Furthermore, members of the privileged race discover that status in their own group demands rejection of close social contact with members of the subordinate race. All these notions and feelings are strengthened by rationalizations about innate superiority, and symbolized by stereotypes of the "nigger," "greaser," "Jap," and the like.

*Economic Opportunities and Exploitation.* The general hypothesis with reference to economic participation by members of minority ethnic groups, especially Negroes, is that they are in the main restricted to the least attractive and most poorly paid occupations, that for the same work they are paid less than white persons, that in hard times they are the first to be laid off and the last to be hired,

that they are usually excluded from professional and trade associations and from labor unions. Let us examine the evidence bearing on these and related points.[4]

As to occupations, the largest numbers of Negroes are found in agriculture, domestic and personal service. The percentages of gainfully employed Negroes who are found in trade, clerical occupations, and the professions are much smaller than the corresponding percentages of white workers. The percentage of Negro women who work outside the home is twice as great as the percentage of white women. Two fifths of the colored-women workers are domestic servants, the next largest groups being farm laborers and laundry operatives.

Of the Negro farmers, only one fifth are owners, contrasted with three fifths of white farmers. On the average, they operate smaller farms with cheaper land and buildings. Until recently, nearly half of all Negro farmers have been sharecroppers. This situation is being changed as many landlords are evicting their tenants and hiring them as day laborers. The sharecropping system is one under which the owner furnishes rations, clothing, and other necessities of life in addition to land, buildings, tools, livestock, and seed. The landowner directs the work, keeps the accounts, and disposes of the crop. While a means of providing credit for impecunious Negroes, the system facilitates exploitation. An unscrupulous landlord can keep his sharecroppers constantly in debt, and the laws of some states forbid the tenant's leaving while he owes anything. This, together with the practice of arresting rural Negroes and compelling them to work for white men who pay their fines or assume the role of "voluntary probation officers," helps to perpetuate a status of virtual peonage for many.

In industry, Negroes have been handicapped by limited training

[4] Data are drawn principally from *Negroes in the United States, 1920–1932* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1935]); E. B. Reuter, *The American Race Problem* (1938).

in skilled trades, a general belief in their inability to perform technical tasks, a reputation for shiftlessness, and the hostility of trade-unions. As a result, colored workers are restricted chiefly to unskilled trades. In any line of work, they are likely to receive lower wages than those of white employees. Even W.P.A. (work relief) wages have been lower in areas where Negroes predominate than in sections where they are a small minority. While the American Federation of Labor has professed an opposition to racial discrimination, its member organizations have not in general shown themselves friendly to Negroes. A large number of them specifically exclude Negroes by constitutional provisions. Others discourage rather than forbid the admission of colored workers. Still others admit Negroes, but only to separate locals. A few accept colored members, but bar them from holding office. The United Mine Workers and the garmentworkers' unions are among the few that admit Negroes on terms of equality with white persons. It should be noted that these last-named are industrial unions, two of them affiliated with the C.I.O. (Congress of Industrial Organizations). The older craft unions affiliated with the A.F. of L. have usually refused or restricted membership of Negroes.

Negroes are particularly hampered in entering and carrying on the professions. There are few professional schools especially for them; they are not admitted to white schools in the South; and they find various difficulties in the way of attending professional schools in the North. Often they are not wanted; commonly the cost is beyond their ability to pay; internships are hard to arrange. There are relatively more clergymen among Negroes than among whites, but most of them are men of very limited education. Their teachers make a somewhat better showing, especially in cities. They have some able physicians, dentists, and nurses, but the numbers of these are pitifully small. In most instances, Negroes are excluded from professional associations to which white people belong. Their

own organizations are smaller, less ably led, less well financed, and, in general, less able to serve their needs and interests.

Other indications of the low economic status of Negroes are the small number of independent business enterprises of which they are proprietors, the small percentage of home ownership, and the low valuation of their houses. The unemployment-relief census of October, 1933, showed 9.5 per cent of the white population and 17.8 of Negroes to be receiving relief at that time. But, contrary to expectation, an analysis of urban workers on relief in 1934 showed little difference in the duration of unemployment of white and colored.[5] In general, however, statistical data support common observation that Negroes have low incomes and little wealth, work chiefly at menial tasks, and are commonly excluded from organized economic groups.

*Educational Opportunities and Neglect.*[6] During the early days of American history, there was little formal schooling for either white or black. Throughout the period of slavery, there continued to be very little for Negroes. But during and following the Civil War, various philanthropic organizations established schools for colored children. The Freedmen's Bureau, under the War Department, started others and assumed general supervision over Negro education. By 1870, it was able to report about 150,000 Negro children in school. Presently there appeared elementary, secondary, and collegiate institutions under the auspices of various denominational boards. They tended to stress the conventional, classical learning. But soon emphasis began to shift to industrial training, as at Hampton and Tuskegee. Between 1890 and 1914, there were

[5] *Urban Workers on Relief* (Works Progress Administration, Research Monograph IV [1936]), pp. 89–90.

[6] Data are drawn principally from the *Biennial Survey of Education, 1932–34* (U. S. Office of Education [1935]); *Negroes in the United States, 1920–1932* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1935]); and E. B. Reuter, *The American Race Problem* (1938).

established seventeen land-grant schools. Public-school systems in the Southern states arose during the period of Reconstruction. At first, under pressure of the North, schools were "mixed," but, after the withdrawal of troops and readmission of the states, the races were separated. In the beginning, Negro schools were very inferior to white. This condition is still widely prevalent, but there has been much improvement.

At the present time, discrimination against Negroes manifests itself in a number of ways. The relative availability of education to the two races is indicated first in the length of the school term. In 1933–1934, in the seventeen states with separate schools, the average term for Negro schools was 142 days, contrasted with 164 days for white schools. At the same time, there were 44 pupils per teacher in Negro schools as against 33 in white schools. In 1929, the annual expenditure for teachers' salaries per pupil enrolled averaged $11.78 for the colored and $32.57 for the white. The per capita value of school property is much greater for whites than for Negroes, the ratio being sometimes as high as seven to one. Partly because the schools are less adequate and partly for other reasons, pupil status and educational attainments of Negroes are poorer than those of white persons. In 1933–1934, the ratio of school enrollment to the population of school age (7–13) was 0.826 for Negroes and 0.837 for whites, practically the same. But the average number of days attended was 111 for Negroes and 134 for white children. Of the Negro school children, 59.1 per cent were in grades one to three; only 6.6 per cent were in high school. Of the white children, only 38.6 per cent were in grades one to three, while 18.8 per cent were in high school. Hypothetically this might be attributed to differences in mental ability, but there is no good reason to believe intellectual differences are as great as these figures might suggest. Dropping out is to be attributed largely to lack of high-school facilities, distance between home and school, poverty, and other discouraging features of the situation. A final meas-

ure of the limited participation of Negroes in our educational system is the percentage of illiteracy. In 1930, this was 16.3 for Negroes, contrasted with 1.5 for native whites. This again might be charged to lower native ability, but the steady decline over the last thirty years indicates that it is more properly attributed to limited opportunity. During this period, Negro illiteracy has dropped from 44.5 per cent to 16.3, while native-white illiteracy has dropped from 4.6 per cent to 1.5.

*Other Aspects of Segregation.* Other aspects of segregation may be touched upon more briefly. The most obvious is residential segregation. This physical separation of the races limits their social contacts, but might be presumed to promote the development of neighborhood and community organization within each racial group. Whether or not this is really the case, we do not know. The main objections raised by Negroes to the districts within which they are often confined are that these areas are dilapidated, unhealthy, unsightly, and shared by the least acceptable white people. The Jim Crow laws pertaining to transportation are similarly annoying and humiliating.

Separate recreation facilities—parks, playgrounds, theaters, dance halls, young people's associations, and all the rest—might not be so hampering if the quality and adequacy of Negro agencies were on the same level as those open to white people. But this is not often the case. Moreover, opera, symphony concerts, and some other forms of high-class entertainment are almost inaccessible to Negroes. As to churches, 24 of the 213 religious bodies reported in the 1926 census were exclusively for Negroes. The great majority of Negroes who belong to any church are affiliated with one of these denominations. Almost the same percentages of whites and of Negroes are members of some church. But we know that great numbers of the colored churches are ill-equipped, poorly staffed, and limited in their program of religious, educational, and social activities. Hence, segregation actually implies deprivation.

It is notorious that Negroes are restricted in the matter of political activity. As slaves, they were obviously outside the party system and could take no part in government. Before the Civil War, free Negroes were generally forbidden to vote, to testify against white people, to serve on juries, to carry firearms, and to assemble freely. Such laws were adopted in Northern as well as in Southern states. Under the Reconstruction Act of 1867, Negroes voted and held office. After the period of chaos passed, the white leaders of the South felt impelled to restrict political activity to members of their own race, which they did through a number of devices such as "grandfather clauses," poll taxes, and tests of ability to read or interpret the constitution. Gradually, here and there, Negroes were permitted to vote. They always took an important part in the affairs of the Republican Party in the South. But in the late 1920's, the Republican Party sought to win Southern white men, and to accomplish this end pushed Negroes somewhat into the background. The Democratic Party has often assumed the right to restrict its membership to white men. Of course, they alone could vote in the Democratic primaries where public officials were really chosen, since the Republicans rarely had a chance to carry an election in the South. Nevertheless, there has been an increase in the Negroes' participation in political affairs, in the South as well as in the North.

Negroes have, of course, been debarred from holding office in the South since the Reconstruction period. But a small number have been elected to city councils, state legislatures, and to Congress, from Northern and Western states. A few have been made policemen and probation officers. Some have been appointed to Federal positions, but the *Negro Year Book* reports that their number has decreased during the past twenty-five years.

In court, the Negro has less chance for justice than has a white man. If he has a white "angel," he may get off very easily. Otherwise, he is more likely to be found guilty, likely to receive a heavier

sentence, and, in general, to be more harshly dealt with. Usually, he may not serve on juries, although this occasionally happens.

Thus, by segregation as to residence, transportation, recreation, religion, politics, and government, Negroes are restricted in the range of social contacts, group memberships, and cultural participation.

*Negro Reactions to Prejudice and Segregation.* Negroes have displayed a variety of reactions to the social restrictions placed upon them. What is the relative frequency of each attitude, we do not know, but we can identify several distinct lines of thinking, feeling, and behaving. In the first place, many Negroes, especially in the rural South, appear to accept their situation without feeling, or at least without expectation of change. Whether they are really apathetic or merely inarticulate is hard to tell. At all events, they make little if any effort to alter their conditions of life. This general group of reactions seems to involve recognition of white superiority. Sometimes it includes imitation of the white people. The urge to be like white folk manifests itself variously, in the seeking of a mate who is lighter colored than oneself, dreaming of being white, and, in some cases, attempting to pass as white.

A second type of response to the interracial code is that of servility. This manifests itself in a whining, cajoling tone; in numerous forms of deference, such as tipping the hat, saying "Yes, sir, boss," and such; in telling white people what Negroes think they want to hear; in studying how to make white people comfortable in body and mind. Sometimes this "being a good Negro," or behaving in accordance with the conventional code, seems to be defensive, the avoiding of hurts to body or to pride. Sometimes it seems to be a rather clever means of "working" white people. The external conduct is similar to that of the first type, but the attitudes are not necessarily so. Those of the first group are more passive forms of accommodation.

A third and very general reaction is that of escape through re-

ligion. If one is hampered in this world, perhaps he can escape all restrictions in heaven. Meanwhile, in the emotional experiences of the church service or the revival meeting, the oppressed find temporary release. This fact is believed to account for the important role of religion among American Negroes.

A less complete form of withdrawal from the difficult issues of race relations is that of Negro solidarity and ethnic pride. Some members of the group rationalize the advantage that lies in having obstacles to overcome. They glorify the attainments of Negroes in music, literature, painting, athletics, business, or the professions. They promote Negro fraternal orders, civic associations, churches, commercial establishments, and other groups and institutions. These various manifestations of racial pride and attempts at self-sufficiency have sometimes been described as a sort of Negro nationalism.

Superficially like the last type of response, but fundamentally different, is the effort to win the respect of white people for Negroes in new roles. This involves refusal to accept the status quo, and an attempt to demonstrate Negroes' capacity for something different. Such was the program of Booker Washington. He sought to teach his people how to take maximum advantage of the opportunities at their disposal and thereby win approval of the ruling race, not merely for achievements already demonstrated, but also for new ventures about to be undertaken. He advised taking one step at a time, conciliating the white people, but never losing sight of the goal—a maximum participation in American life.

Finally, there is the response of conflict. Under slavery, it took the forms occasionally of crimes against white persons and rarely of insurrection. After the Civil War, and under the leadership of scalawags and carpetbaggers, it involved extreme abuse of the Southern whites. More recently, it has shown itself in the denunciation of lynching, segregation, and peonage, in demands for civil liberties, and sometimes in joining the Communist Party. Those

who take the lead in assailing the dominant race, decrying injustice, and insisting on their constitutional rights are frequently Northern mulattoes rather well educated and highly articulate. Some of this group used to accuse Booker Washington of "selling out the race." They press hard on the white conscience, "calling some to repentance," but alienating and antagonizing others.

As stated before, we are unable to report the relative frequency of these various reactions. Neither do we find ourselves in a position to evaluate them, except that to us it seems obvious that apathy, servility, and otherworldliness solve few problems on any but a temporary basis. Between Negro solidarity, interracial cooperation, and the steady pressing of demands, we have personal preferences, but no present ability to predict results.

*Agencies and Programs for Increasing Social Participation of Negroes.* All through this chapter, we have indicated ways in which the social participation of Negroes is being increased. The public schools are making an especially important contribution at the present time in passing on to colored children the cultural heritage of white America. The demand for Negro labor in Northern industries, especially marked between 1914 and 1929, has opened new worlds to many a black man and his family. Mention might also be made of the city-ward movement, both South and North, and the changing attitudes of white people throughout the country. But at this point, we may call special attention to a number of organizations whose primary or incidental purpose is to expand the social and cultural experience of colored people.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded in 1909 to carry forward the struggle for the "civil, legal, economic, and political rights" of Negroes. It carries on investigations, publicizes its facts, conducts lawsuits, and lobbies for desired legislation. It protests against inadequate schools, housing, health conditions, opportunities for employment. It seeks to break down segregation, and aims at equality of opportunity for all.

The National Urban League was established in 1910 with a somewhat more conciliatory program than that of the N.A.A.C.P. However, it too has engaged in fact finding, and publicizing the results of its investigations. It has sought to develop job opportunities; it has helped Negro laborers to organize; it has promoted neighborhood associations; it has initiated and demonstrated the usefulness of various kinds of social service for Negroes. It is perhaps natural that it should seem to have a larger measure of cooperation from white people than the N.A.A.C.P. has. However, both organizations have officers chosen from both races.

In many cities, interracial conferences have been organized. These are somewhat informal bodies holding meetings at various intervals to promote intergroup discussion of common problems. They stress the proposition that sickness, crime, and ignorance in any part of the population are menaces to everyone, being no respecters of race lines. Committees and discussion groups have been set up by the Christian Associations, community chests, and others. Certain fighting organizations have given special attention to the interests of Negroes and have given Negroes membership on terms of equality with whites. Such are the American Civil Liberties Union, Workers' Alliance of America, Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, the Socialist and Communist parties, and, to a certain extent, the C.I.O. We do not know how useful each of these organizations may be in getting a larger place in the sun for colored people, but the very admission of Negroes to their ranks is itself a significant bit of social participation.

## Suggested Readings

Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1922. A survey of circumstances underlying the Chicago race riot of 1919.

Dollard, John, *Class and Caste in a Southern Town*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937. An intensive study of race relations in a single

community, under the auspices of the Yale Institute of Human Relations. Sociological and psychiatric techniques are here combined.

Doyle, Bertram W., *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1937. An examination of various ways in which the race line is drawn.

Du Bois, W. E. Burghardt, *The Souls of Black Folk.* Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company, 1922. A collection of brilliant essays and sketches by a Negro leader.

Johnson, Charles S., *The Negro in American Civilization.* New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1930. A general work by a Negro sociologist.

Johnson, James Weldon, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1927. A striking piece of fiction by a Negro author.

Reuter, Edward B., *The American Race Problem.* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1927 and 1938. Probably the most satisfactory textbook in this field.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Give the class Bogardus' "Social Distance Test" (*Journal of Applied Sociology*, 9: 299–308). Compare the indexes proposed by Bogardus and discuss their significance for the study of social participation.

2. Give Chapin's "Social Participation Scale" to equal numbers of native white persons and members of another "race," selected so as to correspond in sex and age. Score, tabulate, and compare.

3. Ask some persons belonging to minority ethnic groups to write about their experiences in relation to the dominant white group. From what activities and privileges have they been excluded? How have they compensated for their deprivations?

4. If there are local organizations to promote the interests of specific ethnic groups, secure reports, arrange interviews, or plan visits. Organizations suggested: Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Council of Jewish Women, International Institute, immigrant-aid associations, civic and patriotic societies in foreign colonies. Note social life within the group as well as relations between it and outsiders.

5. In the history of the local community, are there instances of open conflict between different "races"? If so, assemble information from

both sides. In general, what changes have taken place in race relations in the community?

6. What organized groups have members of more than one "race"? Inquire of churches, unions, athletic teams, farm bureaus, student clubs, associations of farm tenants and of unemployed laborers. What adjustments have they made internally (office holding, places of meeting, forms of address, sitting and eating together) and externally (in relation to rival groups, police, press, and other agencies)?

7. Examine the literature on adjustments of individuals from another culture to our ways of living, and present an analysis of the manner in which they felt they were handicapped by their background. (See William C. Smith, *Americans in the Making*, especially chaps. 5–6.)

8. List the opportunities open to members of other "races" in your community which are the same as those open to the white "race," especially opportunities to become leaders. For example, schools may be open to white and colored, but colored students may not be elected to office. Note any instances of pronounced participation on the part of the minority group.

9. Get publications of employment bureaus or interview staff members as to the number of applicants from minority "races," what types of occupations they are available for, and how many have been placed. Is there a preponderance of requests for these people in certain types of work? Try and get facts, not guesses, as to the actual number placed within a certain time and in what occupations. What restrictions regarding "race" are laid down by the employers?

10. Do members of the class know of schools, hotels, clubs, fraternities which have restrictions against Jews, Orientals, or members of other ethnic groups in addition to Negroes?

# *Chapter 17*

# CLASS BARRIERS: "POOR WHITES"

WE have considered the handicaps to social participation that seem to inhere in poor health, poverty, ignorance, transiency, and race prejudice. It remains to discover whether there be any merit in the contention that apart from these traits there are class barriers to social intercourse. We often hear such remarks as these: "People from the other side of the tracks never amount to much. Reliefers are just a lot of ne'er-do-wells. What can you expect from that class of people? I don't want any poor-white trash on my farm." By implication, the despised ones differ from their "betters" not only in wealth and income, not only in education, but also in some supposedly inherent characteristics. These vaguely inferred traits are presumably so ineradicable that no amount of schooling or material good fortune could ever make the "lower classes" eligible to move in "good society." "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear" seems to express the underlying popular philosophy. There is also another aspect of social stratification. The inferior folk differ from the superior (in social status) not merely as individuals but as a class. They are believed to share a set of characteristics that distinguish them from the members of other social classes who possess different sets of characteristics.

### The H Family

The family consisting of Mr. and Mrs. H and three small children was living in a four-room house which evidently had never been painted; the porch was sagging, windowpanes were broken and stuffed with rags. Rooms contained barest necessities in the way of furniture: chairs, heavy

table made of rough lumber, two beds covered with ragged quilts, and a large, old wood range. Clothes were hung on nails around the walls.

Cotton and corn had been planted near the house, and there were no outbuildings of any sort.

Mrs. H was in bed at the time of our visit. She is expecting another baby this month. She had a deep cold and has not been feeling well, but seemed to be unconcerned about it, saying, "Oh, I've never had a doctor, besides he charges too much. I guess I'll get along all right."

The children were all at home. The oldest child, aged seven, did not start to school this year because of lack of clothing, but they said he might go next year if they lived nearer a school.

Mr. H's grandfather and father were born in a border state where they owned a farm of forty acres. Mr. H remembered little about the grandfather. In 1920, his own father took his family to the cotton belt, having lost his property in Kentucky through a mortgage foreclosure. He started sharecropping, and was able one year to buy a team. The following year, he became a renter; however, the crop did not pay out, and he had to turn the team over for the grocery bill and go back to sharecropping. Mr. H helped his father with the farmwork until 1931, at which time he married.

Mrs. H was born in a county adjoining the one in which they now live. Her father worked by day on the farms in the community and never owned property. Of her grandfather, she knew nothing. Her father moved to M County to work in cotton in 1929, and there she met Mr. H.

After their marriage, the H's started sharecropping thirty acres of land, but the first year Mr. H had pneumonia, the first child was born, and they had to hire extra labor to work the crop. Consequently, they ended the year owing $30 to the landlord. Mr. H said, "We got off to a bad start, and instead of catching up, have got worse every year." During the next three years, they sharecropped on three different farms, and, in 1935, Mr. H did day labor as they could find no land.

Mrs. H had little to say throughout the interview, but merely nodded agreement to her husband's statements, and he did not consult her about anything.

In January of 1936, the family moved to S County, having made arrangements to sharecrop thirty acres of a one-hundred-acre farm. That year, the landlord "furnished" him $85 during the year, and he was allowed to gin his cotton wherever he chose. He was unable, however, to

make expenses, and, in the latter part of the year, secured four months of W.P.A. work and thus paid his bills.

In 1937, he sharecropped on the same land, but had only fifteen acres of cotton, and the landlord told him he could not "furnish" him. Also that year, he had to take his cotton to a certain gin. He said that he did not know why, and that he never saw any of the figures. He did not get out of debt, and, in November of that year, applied for assistance from the Social Security Commission.

Again in 1938, he sharecropped the same fifteen acres of land, but was helped with direct relief throughout the year. Even this did not meet his family's needs, and, in the middle of the summer, he put a $65 mortgage on the crop, which was taken by his merchant. At the end of the year, he paid off the mortgage and said, "What did we have to show for it? We bought one little pig and had $1.65 left. And none of us bought any clothes."

This year, Mr. H has started his fourth crop on the same farm with the same amount of land, but also has looked all over the neighborhood for additional land which he was unable to find. He stated, "You can't make a living off fifteen acres when you get just part of it. And I work all my crop by myself. Any man that will work can make a living if he can get enough land, and I'd rather have it any day than W.P.A. or relief. But I guess that's the way it's gotta be."

He has no farm machinery, and this year they lost the pig. For the first time, they have put in a small garden with seed distributed through the Social Security office, but have no jars for canning.

In further discussing the situation, he said, "Me and my wife always vote the Democratic ticket, but I can't see it has helped us an awful lot. With all this land down here, it's a funny thing to me they can't figure out a way for us to get enough to make a living."

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. H attend church. She never belonged, but stated that as a girl she often went to the Baptist Church "to get out of work." Mr. H was brought up in the Catholic Church, but has not attended since his marriage, saying, "I don't know why, I just quit going." Each completed the eighth grade, but Mr. H said he only went about half of each year because his father needed him at home on the farm.

There were no books, magazines, papers, or radio in the home, and Mr. H declared it had been three years since they had been to a picture show. "We don't have the money." Mr. H and his neighbors visit together in

town on the days they have no farmwork. He declared, "They all feel just like I do. We've walked our legs off trying to get more land for crop, and then when we can't, and have to ask for help, they say we're too damned lazy to work."

The merchant with whom Mr. H trades, and who took a mortgage on his crop last year, stated that he felt Mr. H was "above the average type of sharecropper," as most of them just sat around complaining. Too, most of them wouldn't pay their bills, and Mr. H did try to pay his. He added, "But I know any number of fellows around here who make no more than he does and they would never think of asking for relief—you've just got that class of people and nothing can be done about it."

The landlord was interviewed, and said he was glad to have Mr. H work for him, but that it certainly wasn't his fault if the man had to ask for help. "What does the government expect us to do—give them a crop, 'furnish' them, and then take 'em in and feed 'em if they can't make a living?" He went on to say, "But I'm glad to keep that fellow. On the land next to him, I've had five sharecroppers in the last five years. You can't depend on them, for they'll just move away and leave the crop if things don't go to suit them."

### The Parker Family

Sam Parker is seventy-two years old and his wife, Mary, is sixty-two. They live in a small, hutlike cabin on a large farm in the Mississippi delta. Most of their lives they have been sharecroppers, moving about from place to place.

When Sam was one year old, his parents died, and he was adopted by a neighbor. The foster father proved to be a hard drinker who deserted his wife and adopted son while the latter was still very small. By the time Sam was eight years old, he had lived in three states. About this time, he was bound out to a farmer named Curtis, with whom he lived until the latter's death six years later. After this, Sam worked hither and yon for his board and clothes. At the age of eighteen, he began to receive a cash wage, $12 per month. Sam continued at such work until he was twenty-six years old. Then he married, and turned to farming as a tobacco sharecropper, supplementing his income with some work in sawmills.

Three years later, the Parkers moved to Alabama. While there, Sam made a cotton share crop with one broken-winded ox, and worked in a sawmill at fifty to seventy-five cents a day. After eighteen months, they

moved to Kentucky, where they raised corn and tobacco for three years. So things went for nearly twenty years. Twelve children were born to the Parkers. One was killed in an accident and five died of "summer complaint." In 1915, Mrs. Parker died, and within a few months Sam remarried. Maggie Orton, his second wife, had grown up in a tobacco-growing region. From early childhood, she had to work in the fields and never had a chance to go to school. The first year of their marriage, they made a tobacco crop, but there wasn't even enough to provide for the winter. So next, Sam went to Tennessee, where he worked in a munitions factory, earning $5.50 a day, real wartime wages. But the good fortune did not last long. Sam got malaria and became very homesick, so he went back to Maggie. After recovering from malaria, he worked at carpentering and blacksmithing. He received fairly good wages, but was out of work most of the time. In 1918, the Parkers left the poor Kentucky hills for the rich bottom land along the Mississippi River. Five of Sam's children accompanied them.

The first crop yielded enough over the "furnish" to buy Maggie a gingham dress. Sam said the country storekeeper who advanced groceries on credit charged him for many articles he did not buy. He was utterly disgusted with this country, and went back to Kentucky, where he worked in a sawmill for about a year. Then when employment became scarce, he again tried his luck in the delta region. He rented some land and raised a good crop, but had nothing at the end of the year, for the price of corn dropped to 18 cents. Next Sam worked as a day laborer, staying through two crops. Although work was irregular, the $1.25 a day kept the Parkers from going hungry. Again they returned to Kentucky, where for three years Sam did some farming and some carpentering. Then in 1926, they moved again to the delta, Sam working by the day, until the flood of 1927. They moved out ahead of the high water and luckily found a place where they were able to live for three years. Another move took them to the farm of the Murray brothers. This was a year of drought. The garden burned up and living was unusually poor. Again they moved, this time to live with Sam's son-in-law. Most of the time, there was no work and they had to accept relief. This was their first "charity," and it hurt their pride.

Soon they went back to a community in which they had lived before, this time doubling up with Sam's son John and his family. There was a little work in the wheat harvest and a chance to pick cotton in the

fall. Next they moved over near the river, living with a brother-in-law. Together, they made a corn share crop on 80 acres of good land. The crop was excellent, but the price was very low, 18 cents a bushel. After the crop was sold, the landlord owed Sam just $1.72. This was Sam's last attempt as a sharecropper. He moved in with one of his sons. While doing a bit of carpentering, his hand was badly injured, and for a long time he was unable to work. In the fall, he tried husking corn, but got malaria. Later there was a little work on W.P.A., and occasional direct relief. In 1937, there was another flood. They came out with nothing but a quilt apiece. Red Cross gave them a bed, a small stove, a table, and a few other pieces of furniture. After the water receded, Sam got a job cutting wood for a short time.

About this time, one of his sons went to live in a shed on a large farm. He fixed this up and made himself otherwise so useful that the owner gave him regular employment and finally made him foreman. A little later, Sam went to live on the same farm. He and Maggie were getting too old to work very much, but they had a place to stay, and the old-age pension paid for their groceries.

Sam calls himself a Republican, but he voted for Roosevelt and says he would do so again. He is nominally a church member, but has not attended regularly—the distance is too great and his clothes are too poor. He and his wife think most of the landlords they have had are "all right," but one beat him out of $43 wages, another cheated him in store accounts, and a third was "awfully crooked." The Parkers have no strong feeling about Negroes. In fact, they have had little to do with them. They do not consider well-to-do people especially hard, but say they have noticed that rich people have a way of not knowing when folks are hungry.

*Class and Caste in America.* So far as we can discover, there is no society in which everyone is on a par with everyone else. But neither is there any society in which everyone's status is determined absolutely and irrevocably by the sector into which he is born. The caste system of India approximates the latter condition. The communism of Russia may be regarded as an effort toward the former. In all societies, there is some degree of stratification, that is, the fixing and acceptance of roles—occupational, political, religious, mili-

tary, or other—and their accompanying status. When privileges and functions are determined chiefly on the basis of inheritance, we have castes. When they are determined chiefly on the basis of competition, we have open classes. In between, we have more or less fixed classes. The members of different classes may be marked by differences of language, religion, occupation, income, education, place of residence, and characteristic attitudes. But more significant than any of these are the interclass relations of superiority and inferiority and social distance. Mere objective distinctions between various kinds of persons yield classifications but not social groups. The latter possess not merely "a similar mode of life, a similar stock of ideas, feelings, attitudes and forms of behavior," but also "meet one another on equal terms and regard themselves, although with varying degrees of explicitness, as belonging to one group." [1] In other words, there is "differential association"; members of one class treat each other differently from members of other classes. They are more or less aware of the things shared with those in their own class. They have a feeling of inferiority toward those considered above them and a feeling of superiority toward those considered beneath them.

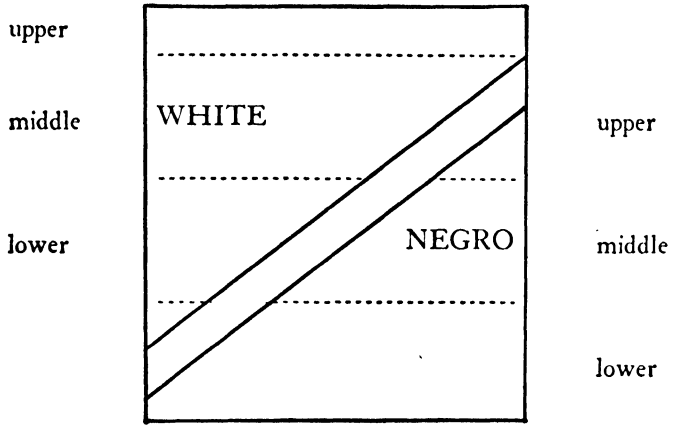
Warner has given us one of the best statements of the meaning of caste and class, and illustrated his thesis by a diagrammatic representation of this phase of social organization in the Deep South.[2]

Caste as used here describes a theoretical arrangement of the people of the given group in an order in which the privileges, duties, obligations, opportunities, etc., are unequally distributed between the groups which are considered to be higher and lower. There are social sanctions which tend to maintain this unequal distribution. Such a definition also describes class. A caste organization, however, can be defined as one where marriage between two or more groups is not sanctioned and

[1] Morris Ginsburg, "Class Consciousness," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 3 (1930), 536. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

[2] W. Lloyd Warner, "American Caste and Class," *American Journal of Sociology*, 42 (1936), 234–7. By permission of The University of Chicago Press.

where there is no opportunity for members of the upper to fall into the lower ones. In class, on the other hand, there is a certain proportion of interclass marriage between lower and higher groups, and there are, in the very nature of the class organization, mechanisms established by which people move up and down the vertical extensions of the society.




Speaking primarily of the Deep South, Warner holds that there is a barrier of caste between white and Negro, while within each race there are class lines. The spaces in the diagram are intended to suggest only very roughly the portion of each racial group that is found in each class. It is intended also to indicate that the small number of upper-class Negroes rank above the lower-class whites, although this is a matter concerning which there is considerable feeling. In any case, very few individuals cross the color line, while larger numbers pass up and down the social ladder within their own caste, and still more remain in the class to which they were born. Similar marks of social distance and similarly limited vertical mobility may be found in many parts of this country. When members of the lower caste are not Negroes, they may be Japanese, Mexicans, or Indians. In place of the F.F.V.'s (First Families of Virginia), the upper white class may consist of descendants of the

*Mayflower* passengers, Native Sons of the Golden West, or families listed in *The Social Register*. The lower white class may be made up of sharecroppers, factory workers, recent immigrants, or families on relief. Despite the fervor with which some orators deny the existence of social classes in the United States, it is quite evident that lines are drawn and that many—perhaps most—people stay on their own side of the line.

The haziness of these lines is due to the fact that our social classes are defined on the basis of multiple factors. Some of them are objective or external, as income, manifest consumption, schooling, office holding, and the like. Others are more subjective and intangible, as inferiority feelings, common interests, and sense of solidarity. (These traits, by the way, are not always present.) Partly objective and partly subjective is the fact of stratification, with degrees of esteem or prestige and rationalization in terms of "natural inequality" and "native differences." In certain circles, class lines are indicated by very obvious symbols, such as the garb of religious orders and the uniform of military men. But usually classes are separated more subtly. "Good form," "respectability," "keeping up with the Joneses," "dress," "entertaining," and the like are used not only to maintain one's status in a given social class, but also to demonstrate one's separateness from those on lower levels. Zorbaugh has described the social ritual whereby persons on various rungs of the social ladder distinguish themselves.[8] Those at the top (Gold Coast) must live only on certain streets or in certain hotels; their clothes must be in the prevailing exclusive mode; they may not carry a package or an umbrella; they do not go to functions in streetcars or Yellow Cabs; for them to show curiosity is the height of ill breeding; to hold a spoon or fork wrong is fatal. In contrast to the Gold Coast, Towertown, like the traditional Greenwich Village, goes in for anonymity and eccentricity with a tinge of radicalism. Married women keep their

[8] Harvey W. Zorbaugh, *Gold Coast and Slum* (1929), pp. 57–61, 87–102.

maiden names; unmarried couples flaunt their liaisons; those who can arrange it live in studios and eat in tearooms; they talk glibly of modern poetry, music, and art; in various ways they try desperately to be bohemian and demonstrate their emancipation. Both the Gold Coast and Towertown are displaying snobbishness toward the bourgeois folk who work for modest salaries, conduct small businesses, marry conventionally, go to church, send their children to public school, join luncheon clubs and fraternal orders. These middle-class folk in their turn look down on wage earners without white collars, farmers, people on W.P.A., and immigrants. They may ignore the bohemians, but they look up to the captains of industry and social leaders who live on the Gold Coast. Thus, it appears that we do have in America a number of social classes, varying from region to region and from city to country, but each emulating the class just ahead and each seeking to outdistance the one just behind. It is an open system, marked by a gradient up and down which individuals pass. There is social climbing and descent; there are occupational changes. This fluidity or flexibility is perhaps traceable to the relative newness of our country, the rapidity of cultural change, until recently, free land, untapped natural resources, expanding business, large streams of immigration. But from now on, with population aging and approaching a numerical equilibrium, the frontier gone, some of our natural resources depleted, and business contracting, we may find class lines drawn more sharply. Those who have been without regular employment for several years, whose children have grown up on the dole, and whose grievances and aspirations have been rendered articulate by Dr. Townsend, Huey Long, and Father Coughlin may display a more vigorous class consciousness than has hitherto been evident at the bottom of our social ladder. A little farther up, the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. have been building class solidarity among organized wage earners. Perhaps similar developments will occur on other levels.

Now if it be granted that there are social classes in the United States, the question of concern to us is this: Do class barriers interfere with the volume and variety of personal contacts, group memberships, and cultural activities? Especially do they handicap those on the lower levels? To answer this with accuracy, we should hold constant such factors as personal health, schooling, income, and occupation. Otherwise, we cannot say definitely that class lines as such hamper social participation. But such controls will prove exceedingly difficult to arrange, for class lines, as we have seen, are drawn partly in terms of these very items. The best that we can do is to describe certain social classes and present the admittedly inadequate evidence bearing on their social participation. Where inferences seem warranted, we shall draw them. Where open questions remain, we shall point to them as inviting further research.

*The Poor Whites of the South: Their Origins.* Scattered over the Southeastern quarter of the United States is a large number of white people variously referred to as "poor whites," "crackers," "sandhillers," "rednecks," "hillbillies," and the like. They have several characteristics in common: they are in the depths of poverty; they have had little schooling; they are old Americans derived from north-European stocks. They are looked upon with varying degrees of pity, scorn, annoyance, and romanticism. Northern churches have sent them missionaries and schoolteachers; Southern landowners have hired them as laborers and sharecroppers; industrialists have employed them in textile mills and canneries; moviegoers and radio listeners find them portrayed as feudists and musicians. Some Northerners imagine that the South is peopled entirely by aristocrats, poor whites, and Negroes. Some Southerners deny that there is a poor-white class at all. Perhaps the whole matter can be clarified by reviewing the history of the folks to whom this term is commonly applied.

In the ante bellum South, most of the white people owned no slaves. From the early eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century,

60 to 80 per cent of the whites had neither slaves nor indentured servants, but tilled their own soil. On the other hand, this majority was not made up entirely of poor folk. There were, in fact, three classes of white people: those who owned plantations operated largely by slaves; small farmers or yeomen, mostly non-slave owning; and poor whites. The differences were derived in varying degrees from the time of coming to America, status on arrival, size of family, native ability, and doubtless other factors. That is, the first arrivals had the choice of land; free men had the advantage over indentured servants; the estates of large families were sometimes divided, or younger sons took up inferior land; the less competent often took over what was left by their more energetic and more intelligent neighbors. In tidewater, piedmont, and mountain sections, these processes went on. The following account refers particularly to the older tidewater sections characterized by the plantation system.

In a region peculiarly subject to erosion because of its physiographic aspects, and to soil exhaustion because of the development of a one-crop system using slave labor, the planters constantly shifted to new lands, leaving in their wake "old fields." . . . On the worn out lands the poor whites "squatted," eking out an existence which was uncertain at best, but no worse than what was possible for them on the sandhills and pine barrens where there was land which they could hold because no one else had ever wanted it.

The market for staple products such as cotton and tobacco was dominated by the planters. A part of the yeomen class met this competition by using their own labor and that of their families, but a considerable part of them owned a small number of slaves. . . . Within the economic system then were planters, yeomen farmers, and Negro slaves. Outside the system was a group of poor whites having nothing to sell except their labor, and the market for that was closed to them almost completely by the presence of the Negro slaves. . . .

The system, therefore, left only the worn out lands, the sandhills, and pine barrens for the poor whites. On these they lived near the edge of subsistence by means of a primitive, unorganized, individual type of

economy, hunting, fishing, raising meager "crops" and a few hogs to furnish a supply of salt pork and side-meat. This was a hand-to-mouth process. They waged, according to Beard, "a spiritless battle for existence against poverty and hookworm." [4]

In the mountains, too, there were three classes of white people, but their situation was not greatly influenced by slavery or the plantation system. In the larger valleys, there were relatively prosperous and cultured families. In the smaller valleys, there were less prosperous and less educated, but thrifty and independent, folk. In the coves and on the steeper slopes lived a more isolated, ignorant, and poverty-stricken class. These corresponded to the poor whites of the lowlands.

Many of these mountain folk were descendants of Scotch-Irish and German immigrants who came to Pennsylvania between 1720 and 1770. Finding the coastal plain occupied, they pushed westward and then to the South through the great Appalachian Valley. Some of them were deflected over the mountains into the Carolina piedmont, where they were joined by later and smaller streams of immigrants. Others pushed directly into Tennessee or over the Cumberlands into Kentucky. After the Revolution, many more followed the Wilderness Road into the present tristate region about Cumberland Gap. But after the Cumberland Road was built from Baltimore to Pittsburgh and Wheeling, traffic was largely diverted to the new route, although some newcomers continued to move into the Southern mountain areas.

The early settlers naturally occupied first the larger, more fertile valleys, then the smaller, less accessible valleys, and finally the narrow mountain coves and steep hillsides. Hence, as in the tidewater sections, latecomers, younger sons, restless souls, and incompetents came to occupy the poorer land. The slopes were quickly gullied, the forests were stripped, wild game was greatly reduced,

[4] Mildred R. Mell, "Poor Whites of the South," *Social Forces*, 17 (1938), 153–67. By permission of *Social Forces*.

and poverty became endemic. There is a myth that the "mountain whites" are descendants of indentured servants and criminals from the lowlands, but there is little evidence to support this belief. The poverty, ignorance, ill-health, and thriftlessness apparent in many mountain homes are readily accounted for in terms of the historical background just described and the subsequent isolation.

Many of the settlers brought with them traditions of learning and even small libraries. But roads were bad; post offices, telephone, telegraph, radio, newspapers, and other modern means of communication were nonexistent. The mountains are not high, but the terrain is irregular and often rugged. The streams of westward migration all through the nineteenth century went around the Southern highlands. Hence, contact with the seaboard was largely lost; books wore out; frontier conditions offered little incentive for book learning; presently illiteracy became widespread. Few professional men penetrated the mountain fastnesses. Most of the clergy were unschooled; physicians were rare and ill-equipped; meagerly trained lawyers were found in county-seat towns. Throughout the region, there were practically no schools. Yet it would be a mistake to regard the mountain people as degenerate. In their isolation, they kept alive much of the religion, some of the folklore and music which their fathers had brought across the ocean. From many points of view, they made a good adjustment to their rough environment. Perhaps their humor and shrewd common sense have served them better than the lost wisdom of books might have done.

Between the Civil War and the World War, many changes took place in tidewater, piedmont, and mountain sections. After emancipation, the poor whites might have been used to replace the former slaves. But for various reasons, this did not happen. "They were not immediately under foot, they did not stand in the good graces of the planters, and they themselves held the labor which

slaves had performed as something beneath them." [5] Presently a system of farm tenancy grew up. The new tenants were drawn from all classes of the old economy—planters, yeomen, slaves—and also from the poor-white class. A few even came down from the mountains at the invitation of the larger landowners. The sharecropping system, which required no capital and provided a living while crops were being made, offered a new opportunity for the marginal folk and made the poor whites for the first time a recognized part of the established economy of the country.

Another opportunity came with the industrial expansion of the South. The opening of coal mines in the mountains and textile mills in the piedmont sections attracted cheap labor from mountain coves, sand hills, and pine barrens. Wages were low and living conditions were hard, but, to the poor whites, mining towns and mill villages offered a chance to earn some real money (or scrip redeemable at the company stores). To facilitate the development of mines and mills and to open up new sections for lumbering, railroads were built into districts hitherto difficult of access. Thus, the people of the back country were brought into contact with the outside world. During the same period, public schools spread over the South, and illiteracy steadily diminished. In the twentieth century came hard roads, automobiles, tourists, and movies. More and more the isolation of poor whites has been breaking down.

Nevertheless, the stereotypes that characterized them as a distinct class have not wholly passed away. There is still a large white population set apart socially from middle- and upper-class whites, on the one hand, and from Negroes, on the other. These lower-class white people are not identical in type throughout the South, but are alike in being poor, ignorant, and looked down upon. Some are sharecroppers, others are independent hill farmers; some are coal miners, others are mill hands. They present numerous health

[5] Mell, *op. cit.*, p. 160. By permission of *Social Forces.*

problems—malaria, trachoma, pellagra, hookworm. They are often regarded as a special "breed" of white folks, whose biologically determined characteristics are responsible for their social and economic status. To some extent, they look upon themselves as a class apart, displaying attitudes now of inferiority, now of resentment against those who occupy the higher social levels. When they move into Northern cities, they tend to segregate themselves and behave somewhat like a distinctive ethnic group. Finding themselves amid strange surroundings and being treated much as foreigners are treated, they display more rather than less class consciousness and group solidarity.

*Social Participation of the Poor Whites.* From their history, it is evident that folk designated as poor whites have taken little part in the social life of their time and region. Their contacts and activities have been restricted in a number of ways. One of the most obvious, though by no means the most important, has been physical isolation. The difficulties of transportation and communication have been especially apparent in the mountain sections, but before the days of hard roads, automobiles, telephones, and radios, physical isolation was characteristic of the lowlands as well. Today physical barriers are declining in importance. Nevertheless, there are still many people living on back roads, without telephone or radio, going seldom to town, and rarely seeing any but their near neighbors.

Economically, these people are a marginal type. Historically, as we have seen, they took little part in the dominant economy of the South. During the past sixty years, they have been partially absorbed as sharecroppers and industrial laborers. In agriculture, their best days were associated with the period of the World War when prices were high, acreage increased, and labor in demand. But as sharecroppers, the poor whites have been in direct competition with Negroes. Many landowners have preferred Negro tenants because of their greater docility. Hence, white tenants have been sought only in times of expansion and have been dropped in

times of depression. In the mills and mines, whites have usually been preferred to Negroes, but each group has been "played off" against the other. The labor supply has usually been far in excess of the demand. Hence, insecurity and poverty have been well-nigh universal. Opportunities to accumulate capital and rise to a higher economic level have been rare. This marginal status has so frustrated ambition that many people believe the poor whites to be devoid of all desire to better themselves.

Even within their existing milieu, the poor whites have little to say about the conditions of life and work. The paternalism of proprietors and managers leaves to mill hands and tenants little chance to display initiative. In a company town, practically everything is controlled by the corporation through its local representatives. It not only provides work, housing, and retail stores, it also handles medical care, education, and religion, regulates communication with the outside, and does the policing. In agriculture, the sharecropper is almost completely dominated by his landlord, who supplies food, shelter, clothing, and medical care, if any, keeps the accounts, and gives advice on all manner of subjects. The most independent of the poor whites are the squatters and owners of small hill farms, who manage to continue a pioneer type of existence, raising some meager crops, pigs and chickens, "berrying," hunting, and fishing. But their independence rests, in large part, on their isolation. Outside of a few odd jobs, they are nonparticipants in the economic life of the region.

Since 1929, some changes have occurred, but they have not improved the lot of the poor whites. Industrial unemployment has reduced the already narrow margin of existence. Crop reduction has led to the elimination of many sharecroppers, some becoming irregular day laborers at low wages, some going on relief, and others just being turned adrift. An unknown number have become transients. Some efforts have been made to organize the sharecroppers, agricultural laborers, and mill hands. Some bitter clashes have

taken place. These recent events may heighten the class feeling and draw more sharply the class lines, which for a time seemed to be fading.

Education continues to be rather limited. Rural schools in the South have improved, teachers are better trained, school terms are longer, and equipment is more adequate. But attendance is still irregular, owing to the demands of farmwork, sickness, bad weather, lack of proper clothing, and indifference. During the depression, many schools were closed; others were open for shorter terms; and thus some of the gains of previous years were lost. Limited supply and limited demand for education seem to constitute a vicious circle. One old man said to us, "I reckon it ain't fer all to have an education. Some's got to till the soil." A woman said that a boy ought to go to school, but she could see nothing in it for girls. "They marry, and then it don't do them no good." A hill farmer said, "My boys is all so triflin' they wouldn't go to no school at all." Others expressed pathetic eagerness for a little "l'arnin'." [6]

In matters of religion, the poor whites show themselves to live in a cultural backwater. Many of them are devoted members of some Protestant evangelical church, most commonly Baptist or Methodist. But their religion often takes the form of narrow sectarianism. For this, they are not entirely responsible, because it is emphasized by religious leaders whose range of contacts might be expected to produce greater tolerance. At a back-country meeting, we heard a state secretary of missions say, "No one ought to be anything else than a —— [7] on God's footstool. Nobody else but a —— preaches the whole Gospel. I wouldn't care if there was a Methodist church and a Presbyterian church and a Cambellite church and an Episcopal church on every square mile; I would still

[6] From personal interviews with one of the authors.

[7] The name of the denomination is omitted, because we have heard the same sentiments expressed by representatives of other faiths.

want a —— church there, too. If all the rest of them are in there preaching and there's no —— preaching, that's desperate destitution." Many of the local clergy are earnest men of little schooling, who take time from their farming or other work to preach in one or more humble churches. Services are often irregular and, except in the summer, poorly attended. The buildings are usually not very comfortable, the roads are often poor, and most commonly there is no resident pastor. Sunday schools are generally conducted only during the summer months. Other activities are often completely absent. Yet, despite its meagerness, the church seems to mean a great deal to many of the people classed as poor whites.

Recreation is largely of an informal, unorganized type. Families visit back and forth, especially on Sunday. Church services, funerals, school rallies, and political gatherings are among the more important social functions. At various intervals, the country folk go to town and do a little shopping, but for the most part they just stand around and talk. Those who live in mill villages have more opportunities for entertainment and social contacts, at least within their own circle. They get to the movies a little oftener. But poverty hampers them here as elsewhere in the ownership of radios and subscriptions to papers and magazines. At important gatherings, occasioned, for example, by a political campaign or the official opening of a state park, there is often a perceptible social barrier between the poor whites and members of the upper and middle classes.

When we come to the field of politics and government, it is very difficult to generalize. White people are not hampered in voting as are Negroes. But in some states, the requirement of a receipt for poll tax proves to be a serious handicap. Sometimes this is said to be taken care of by politicians, who thus are enabled to regiment the poor-white vote. From time to time, demagogues appeal to the "one-gallus" voters to rise against the aristocrats. They may even reward their supporters with better roads and better schools.

But, in general, it appears that these folk play a very minor role in politics and government.

Concerning all these matters—economic, educational, religious, recreational, and political—we have had to speak in generalities. We are unaware of statistical studies on the basis of which an interpretation might be developed in quantitative terms. The difficulty lies in the fact that the poor whites do not constitute a precisely defined social class, and in the further fact that such differentiation as exists rests on the very traits we have been discussing. That is, poor whites are *defined* in terms of poverty, ignorance, and social distance. Hence, it seems almost useless to undertake a measurement of their social participation. It might, however, be very profitable to inquire statistically whether the disesteem in which they are held seriously hampers efforts to overcome the other handicaps of low income, limited schooling, poor health, and the like.

*Stereotypes and Attitudes.* We have noted that there is some dispute as to whether it is appropriate to speak of a poor-white class. But we have also observed that there are in use terms of disrespect which represent class lines—"poor white," "sandhiller," "cracker," "redneck," "white trash," "hillbilly." To be sure, these terms are used by different groups in different sections and applied to somewhat different kinds of folks. But all of them are marks of social distance. Whatever the objective facts may be, the use of such terms implies that the persons so designated are basically inferior to those who call them by these names. It is often enough true that the poor whites are lacking in energy, ambition, efficiency, thrift, and orderliness, for these traits are hardly to be expected. Because some of the class are actually of low intelligence, it is easy to assume that all their fellows are on the same low mental level. Because their limitations appear in successive generations, it is easy to assume that these traits are inherited through the germ plasm. Thus, they are often described as of "poor stock," "bad blood," and the like. It is supposed that there is much inbreeding among

them, and "everybody" knows that this produces a poor quality of human beings! Doob has summed up the stereotypes and attitudes found in one Southern community as follows: [8]

As a class they are despised by almost every white person in the upper or middle class. The adjectives applied to them are the same used to refer to the Negro caste: shiftless, unreliable, dishonest, etc. But, as far as epithets and social judgments are concerned, they are thought of as more despicable than Negroes. Only some colored people are called "mean," but practically every poor white receives this appellation from someone. "Rednecks" are considered stubborn; it is acknowledged that they resemble Negroes in every indecent, immoral respect; and then the complaint is voiced that they should also be obedient like "the niggers." . . .

They also know that they are no longer considered social or caste equals by the planter class. About one-fifth think they are treated discourteously on the streets of Southerntown or even on the plantations themselves: "A lot of planters speak to niggers quicker than us." The rest feel that, although they receive more respect than do Negroes, they are slighted, nevertheless, from time to time.

We have collected a few comments of middle- and upper-class people expressing their disdain for the poor whites. "We have a drifting population here, just riffraff and floaters, the backwash of the South, and there's nothing you can do with people like that" (a social worker). "It doesn't make any difference if you pay them fifty cents or a dollar a day, it'll all be gone by Saturday night. That kind of people can't keep anything" (a merchant). "They are an ignorant class of people. I've watched them in town on Saturday and they don't even know enough to turn on a water faucet" (a newspaper reporter). "You needn't hope for them to learn anything. Just give them some clothes and get them in school so we can get the state aid" (a school superintendent). A businessman

[8] Leonard W. Doob, "Poor Whites: a Frustrated Class," Appendix I of *Class and Caste in a Southern Town* by John Dollard (1937), pp. 455, 467. By permission of Yale University Press.

gave the following bit of advice to a new social worker in his town: "It will be good business to join the Methodist Church here, for all of the best class of people belong. We don't have any poor people in it." A real-estate firm in a Southern town advertised houses in these words: "This list includes homes that are a mint as renting property, as well as homes that are fine enough for you to live in."

The poor whites recognize the difference between their status and that of the upper- and middle-class folk, but they have no definite explanation for their fate. Much of the time, they seem to accept it without much thought or feeling. But at other times, they express resentment and bitterness. Under the stimulus of "agitators" sent in by labor unions or radical political parties, they give voice to strong feelings that are not so often created as released by their new leaders. In this same connection, it is interesting to note that, while poor whites usually take some pains to demonstrate their "racial superiority" to Negroes, they frequently unite with Negroes in new organizations like the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

In general, it may be said that the poor whites recognize their similarity to one another and their differences from persons on higher economic, educational, and general cultural levels. But they display little evidence of group solidarity. "They view themselves, in short, as a multitude of suffering people, but not as an interconnected, interdependent group." [9]

*Summary.* There are two contradictory beliefs abroad in our country pertaining to caste and class. The first is that there are no social classes in America, but only individual differences. The second is that there are sharply defined caste and class lines. The facts appear to be that the line between Negroes and whites is rather rigidly drawn, especially in the South; while the levels of oppor-

[9] Doob, *op. cit.*, p. 470. By permission of Yale University Press.

tunity and achievement within each race are not so clearly marked. Nevertheless, the use of certain terms of opprobrium indicates that class distinctions do exist. Persons on the lower levels have little property, small incomes, insecurity of tenure, limited schooling, often poor health, a narrow range of social contacts, little part in the affairs of state, little control over their own conditions of life. They are frequently charged with being stupid, shiftless, and mean. It is assumed that they represent biologically inferior stock. All these considerations seem especially applicable to the so-called poor whites of the Old South. For some time, the class lines appeared to be breaking down. But with the depression of 1929 came mass unemployment of industrial workers, eviction of sharecroppers, and the rearing of a generation on relief. Hostility between these disinherited folk and the more substantial citizenry may mark the sharpening of class distinctions.

Statistical measures of the extent to which class barriers hamper individuals in making personal contacts, joining social groups, and sharing in the larger culture have yet to be made. Particularly does it seem important to differentiate between the restrictions inherent in social stratification and those due to poverty, ignorance, poor health, and physical isolation.

## Suggested Readings

Cooley, C. H., Angell, R. C., and Carr, L. J., *Introductory Sociology*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933. Chap. 20 deals with social classes, how they are formed, and handicaps they impose.

Couch, W. T. (editor), *Culture in the South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935. See especially: Hatcher, J. W., "Appalachian America," pp. 374–402; Den Hollander, A. J. N., "The Tradition of Poor Whites," pp. 403–31.

Dollard, John, *Class and Caste in a Southern Town*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937. See especially Appendix I, Doob, Leonard W., "Poor Whites: A Frustrated Class."

*Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930. See vol. 3, articles on "Caste," "Class," "Class Consciousness," "Class Struggle."

Mell, Mildred R., "Poor Whites of the South," *Social Forces,* 17 (1938), 153–67. A history of this class briefly and clearly set forth.

Warner, W. Lloyd, "American Caste and Class," *American Journal of Sociology,* 42 (1936), 234–7. Describes graphically class lines on each side of the racial barrier in the United States.

Young, Kimball, *An Introductory Sociology.* New York: American Book Company, 1934 and 1939. Chap. 24, "Stratification," is a good general discussion of classes and castes and the processes through which they develop.

**Projects for Further Study**

1. Is there in the vicinity any considerable number of native white people called by some name that signifies inferior status? Some such names are "poor whites," "sandhillers," "reliefers," "W.P.A. bums," "Okies," "lower class." In what ways are they handicapped otherwise than by low income, limited schooling, religion, and transiency? Have any of these people escaped the stigma of their class origin by living steadily in one place, earning a good income, and securing a good education? Describe the folk of this class as fully as possible, including as much of their history as can be learned.

2. Examine local newspapers for evidence of class lines. Are certain (native white) family names frequently mentioned and others consistently omitted from the "society" pages or "personal" columns? What characteristics are common to those who are mentioned? To those who are ignored? Note length of residence in the community, ancestry, income, schooling, religion, occupation, residential section, home furnishing and decoration, principal forms of recreation.

3. From magazines, newspapers, sermons, political speeches, and other sources, assemble statements pertaining to the presence or absence of social classes in the United States. What bias is manifest in each instance? Is it implied that the "lower" classes are noble and abused or incompetent and coddled, or do still other attitudes and opinions appear?

4. In the college or university, is there any evidence of class lines, e. g., between "Greek" and "barb"? If so, how do class lines seem to affect athletics, student politics, dating, selection of courses? (See

Elbert L. Hooker, "The Greek and the Independent," *Studies in Sociology* [Southern Methodist University, 1938].)

5. Interview schoolteachers and Sunday-school teachers regarding attitudes in their classes toward children from poor-white families. Are these children prevented from playing with the others, persecuted or bullied, or are no distinctions made?

6. What requirements are there for inclusion in *The Social Register?* The telephone directory? Admission to private schools and colleges? Admission to fraternities and sororities? Membership on boards of civic and philanthropic organizations?

7. Compare the attributes of social classes as defined and described by the sociologists to whom reference has been made in this chapter with the *economic* "noncompeting groups" as defined by Raymond T. Bye, *Principles of Economics*, pp. 421–6; and Frank W. Taussig, *Principles of Economics*, vol. 2, pp. 134–46.

8. Make an objective study of socioeconomic status in some local area. If urban, use Chapin's "Social Status Scale," 1931 (F. S. Chapin, *Contemporary American Institutions*, chap. 19); if rural, use Sewell's "Scale for the Measurement of Socio-Economic Status of Farm Families" (to be had from W. H. Sewell, Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater, Okla.).

# *Chapter 18*

# PERSONAL STIGMA: UNMARRIED MOTHERS AND EX-CONVICTS

THE mores of a community have ever exerted demands for conformity with what the members feel are right and proper modes of conduct. Deviates from this prescribed pattern are severely punished, not, as in times of yore, by exposure in stocks or branding of the "scarlet letter," but by erecting barriers which will put the sinning individual in an unfavorable competitive position, both economically and socially, with those who outwardly at least toe the prescribed marks set. The more self-righteous sometimes feel that they become contaminated by contact with the sinners, and make the life of the latter very difficult. The errors which must be committed to earn this excommunication from the crowd vary in different communities, larger cities, where anonymity is more possible, being more lenient than smaller places. We mentioned in our discussion of syphilis that many infected persons suffer keen humiliation because of the social opprobrium with which the syphilitic is regarded. Many who have been in mental hospitals or who even have relatives suffering from some form of insanity may be made to feel ashamed of the affliction.

Any social condition which is so unacceptable to those with whom one is ordinarily in contact that his associates "won't play with him," that his vocational opportunities are narrowed for reasons other than physical incapacity or lack of skill, or that even his family disowns or barely tolerates him may be regarded as a personal stigma. Frequently, ethical and moral values are involved regard-

ing "rightness" and "wrongness" of specific acts, as in the case of unmarried mothers, prostitutes, sex perverts. Others coming in for disapproval are violators of the criminal codes—e. g., kidnapers, forgers, robbers. There is a certain stigma attached to the divorcee, the Negro, the "poor white," the foreign born, depending on group standards and ideals. It does not provoke group disapproval to kill a man among certain head-hunting tribes. Nor is the Negro at any disadvantage in many European countries. But premeditated murder is a capital offense in all civilized countries, and in most Southern states the colored folk are stigmatized as an inferior race, and denied many rights and privileges. It seems we cannot identify personal stigma with any fixed criteria, although its social connotations are obvious. We have sought to emphasize only two types here, offenders against the moral codes—unmarried mothers, and ex-convicts.

## THE UNMARRIED MOTHER AND HER CHILD

Society makes the path difficult for both the unmarried mother and her illegitimate child. The former symbolizes illicit love, loose living, one who sets an unfortunate example for the community and accordingly must be punished. The same attitude is carried over to the child, an innocent victim of the mother's actions, so that if the facts are known he is continually dogged by his mother's history. Whether this attitude has the restraining influence with which people credit it or not, it certainly makes for secrecy and attempts to keep the facts hidden. Several issues involved in the problem come out in the following examples.

### Mildred Story

Mildred was more than upset when she was told at the hospital clinic, where she had gone for consultation about some ailment, that she was pregnant. She found it hard to accept the fact, and became quite frantic in talking with the hospital social worker. "No one must ever know," she kept saying. She was then pregnant six months.

Mildred had been brought up with a number of brothers and sisters in a small town. Her family was very religious and the children were reared strictly. Great stress had been placed on education, and they had all graduated from high school. Mildred had taken a business course in school and had held a secretarial position for some time in her home town. Then, wanting to earn more and eager for the life in the city, she had come up to live with some old friends. She secured a position in the city and made a number of friends. Mildred was a very attractive girl, blonde and blue-eyed. She fell into the habit of going out with a number of the girls she met, and some of the boy friends whom they provided. At home, she had been very much protected and was not used to the pseudosophisticated crowd with which she became identified. Nor was she used to drinking. The social life apparently went to her head. She was much attracted to a tall dark lad in the group, whom she described to the social worker as a smart aleck, very sure of himself. One night, when she had had too much to drink, they had intercourse. She recoiled now at the thought that she had done such a thing. She cared nothing for this chap, the alleged father of her child, and would not want to think of marrying him, even if he wished to marry her, which apparently he did not.

Mildred could hardly think straight, and did not know what she was to do. She felt that what was most desirable for her in the circumstances was to make plans for her hospitalization as quietly as possible, and to relinquish the baby for adoption as soon as she could. She was troubled because some agencies had the policy of making a mother care for her child for a period of three to six months after birth. "If I do that," she said, "I may be too attached to the kid and not want to give it up." What did she have to offer the baby? she asked. She could earn barely enough to support herself, and, if anyone knew of the baby, she might lose her position and find it difficult to get another. She could never be welcome at home. What chance would her child have?

Mildred voiced many of the questions which other girls in her predicament have asked. But she managed to marshal her resources and solve her problem in what she considered the best way. She arranged with a society placing children for adoption to take the baby immediately after birth. She kept the knowledge of the birth a secret from all her relatives. What she may have felt later in regard to her plans, we do not know.

### Ruth Bradley

In contrast to Mildred's solution of her predicament, Ruth Bradley kept her baby. Unlike Mildred, Ruth was not brought up in a small town. In fact, she lived in a variety of places and with a number of different relatives after the death of her father. Her mother never seemed to be able to support her and her sister, and finally, after various accusations made against her by relatives, she gave up the two children to a distant relation who had no children of her own. This cousin and her husband adopted the youngsters. Although the adopted parents tried very hard to bring the children up carefully, they were older than the real parents had been and more set in their ways. In contrast to her sister, Ruth was openly defiant, ran away several times, and attempted to do things which she knew would embarrass her adopted parents. She was given an adequate education and a special business course in the city where they lived. She was a rather impulsive girl, went out a lot with both boys and girls, with several of whom she became very friendly.

It was her adopted mother who suspected that she was pregnant and insisted on the girl having an examination. She was horrified that Ruth should so defy convention, and felt that she and her husband were ill-rewarded for the money and effort which they had expended on her. They did pay, however, for medical care and for the girl's confinement in a maternity home. While there, she was referred to a child-placing agency, for she expressed a passionate desire to keep the child. Because Ruth showed such determination, and had proved very co-operative in the maternity home, arrangements were made to place the baby in a foster home while Ruth turned her attention to getting a job. It is not quite clear whether the parents did not want her at home or whether Ruth, angered at their reaction toward her, was too proud to go back. In any case, she never considered going back to what was home to her nor did she feel she could get in touch with her old crowd. She became very quiet, shy, and withdrawn, concentrating her entire attention on the child, *her* child. The alleged father was a married man and could do nothing for her. Besides, he claimed it was not his child.

In spite of her business training, she could secure no clerical position, so she finally took a job as a domestic servant. She felt she must work and support the child. She held for several years a series of housework jobs and a few factory jobs which were short-lived. Never did she miss

paying her share of the baby's board or buying clothing even to the point of denying herself. She visited the child regularly. This is the present situation.

One may question what the future is for either the mother or baby. The mother, Ruth, is obviously living for the child, but her employment chances do not look as though she will be able to do much for him in the future. She hopes they may have a home together. The few people she knows regard her as a single girl. The foster parents of the child know the circumstances but probably have not circulated her story. The child is not yet of school age. When he is, and some account of his daddy is asked for, explanations will be difficult.

These two stories show different solutions adopted by two unmarried mothers for their problems. Mildred made plans for her child in which she would have no future part, where he would enter a new home and grow up as a part of that environment. She would re-enter her old life still a single woman. Ruth could not bear to part with her child; she was keeping it against great odds. We do not presume to pass judgment on which is the best solution. Pressure of society and many maternity homes for unmarried mothers have given considerable sanction to the course Ruth was following. The concept of "mother love," holding that no one can care for a child like its own mother, has been one basis for this attitude. Another is a feeling that the mother is expiating her guilt by her struggles in rearing the child. Against this belief that the mother should assume responsibility for the child's upbringing, there are those who point out possible social hurt to a child, which seems to be greater if he is in an environment where his status is known. On numerous occasions, he may be required to produce a birth certificate which tells his story plainly. He may spend his time in boarding homes or institutions apart from his mother. If the mother marries and establishes a home for him, that is one solution. If she establishes a home without marrying, he may not have a great deal of protection. This is a problem for which there is no single answer.

Both Mildred and Ruth earned the disapproval of society, at least the particular group from which each sprang. Each felt the need to conceal her condition and was ashamed of her plight. Neither was very well provided for financially, so that economic considerations entered into any plan for themselves and their children. That is usually the situation of unmarried mothers known to social agencies. When financial help is not needed, we rarely know how the girls work out their difficulties. In neither instance here cited was the mother helped by the alleged father of her child. He is rarely made to feel any responsibility in such situations, and suffers little disapproval of society. In these two cases, no efforts were made even to establish contact with him. In Mildred's case, she desired no marriage with the father. In Ruth's case, the alleged father was married. Practically all the satisfaction, if one may use such a term, which can be obtained from a recalcitrant alleged father is the securing of some financial assistance and a statement of paternity which gives the child some slight standing in a legal sense. But it is frequently very difficult to establish the father's identity, and state laws differ widely in the protection provided either the mother or the child thereby.

*Extent of Illegitimacy.* The exact extent of illegitimacy in the United States is not known, owing to the desire on the part of many mothers to avoid the social stigma of registering a child as illegitimate and owing to differences in customs and in methods of compiling vital statistics in the several states. All censuses attempted have been considered quite inadequate. Statistics of this relationship are naturally expressed in terms of illegitimate births, not the number of illegitimate pregnancies, many of which are disposed of by abortions. Greater numbers of such registered births for a specific locality may be just an indication of more adequate records rather than of a higher illegitimacy rate.

In 1936, the latest year for which we have "complete" information, the vital statistics for the country listed 72,338 illegitimate

births.[1] This was approximately 3,000 less than the previous year, and a decrease in ratio per 1,000 live births from 41.1 to 39.8. Compared with ten years previous, when 40,467 illegitimate births were listed, or even in the year 1929, when 64,161 were recorded, the 1936 figures represent a substantial increase.[2] In fact, although there was a slight reduction in 1936, the number of illegitimate children born has increased during the depression in too great a proportion, and the increase is too evenly distributed throughout the reporting states to be accounted for (in large part) as anything but a depression phenomenon. During this time, it will be recalled, the marriage rate and the total birth rate were declining.[3] Explanations have stressed the alleged letdown of moral barriers or the inability of persons to marry on their reduced incomes.

A strong racial factor is evident in statistics regarding illegitimacy. The white race proportionately produces one eighth as many illegitimate children as do other races, chiefly the Negro. In 1936, the ratio of illegitimate children born to white mothers per 1,000 live births was 20.3 as compared with 162.4 born to women of other races.[4] (See Table 54.)

Table 54 also shows that more births occur in rural than urban communities, despite the fact that many unwed, pregnant girls seek a larger community where their plight will not be known and where there is more apt to be a maternity home or anonymous hospital care. The reality of the search for anonymity is made manifest by investigations which disclosed that between 67 and 95 per cent of unmarried mothers cared for in maternity homes in large cities were nonresidents.[5] Nevertheless, the rate of illegitimate births per

[1] *Births, Stillbirths, and Infant Mortality, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 9.

[2] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *Dependent and Neglected Children*, vol. IV-C, Part I, p. 252.

[3] "Illegitimacy During the Depression," *Statistical Bulletin*, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 17 (1936), 7–9.

[4] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[5] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

1,000 live births in rural areas exceeds that for the country as a whole and for cities, both small and large.

Although we have no data covering the United States as a whole, many studies of illegitimacy have sought information about

Table 54

NUMBER OF ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO RACE AND URBAN AREA, 1936 [a]

| SIZE OF AREA | TOTAL | | WHITE | | OTHER RACES | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Ratio to 1,000 Live Births* | *Number* | *Ratio to 1,000 Live Births* | *Number* | *Ratio to 1,000 Live Births* |
| Total for the United States | 72,338 | 39.8 | 31,850 | 20.3 | 40,488 | 162.4 |
| Cities of 10,000 or more | 30,461 | 40.5 | 16,441 | 24.3 | 14,020 | 182.9 |
| Cities of 2,500 to 10,000 | 5,741 | 28.8 | 2,969 | 16.1 | 2,772 | 182.1 |
| Rural | 36,136 | 41.8 | 12,440 | 17.6 | 23,696 | 150.5 |

[a] *Births, Stillbirths, and Infant Mortality, 1936* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 11–2.

the unmarried mother: her age, occupation, interests, background. All of these studies have been based on limited numbers of cases, mostly selected from social-agency records, since their data are more readily available and more complete than statistics at large. These studies show quite uniformly that the majority of unwed mothers are young, both among the white and the colored. Among 1,817 illegitimate families in New York City in 1930, the median age for white unmarried mothers fell between 20 and 24 years, while that for colored girls was about five years less.[6] The range of ages, however, varied from girls of 14 and 15 to a few women over 40. Other surveys showed even larger proportions of young girls. Results of six early investigations revealed that "about one-half are under twenty years of age, and four-fifths of the whole

[6] Ruth Reed, *The Illegitimate Family in New York City* (1934), p. 117.

Table 55

UNMARRIED MOTHERS CLASSIFIED BY AGE AND COLOR[a]

| AGE GROUP | TOTAL | | WHITE | | NEGRO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* |
| Total | 1,490 | 100.0 | 1,067 | 100.0 | 423 | 100.0 |
| Under 16 | 74 | 5.0 | 37 | 3.5 | 37 | 8.7 |
| 16–19 | 547 | 36.7 | 348 | 32.6 | 199 | 47.0 |
| 20–24 | 590 | 39.6 | 456 | 42.7 | 134 | 31.7 |
| 25–29 | 185 | 12.4 | 153 | 14.3 | 32 | 7.6 |
| 30–34 | 65 | 4.4 | 50 | 4.7 | 15 | 3.6 |
| 35–39 | 22 | 1.5 | 16 | 1.5 | 6 | 1.4 |
| 40 and over | 7 | 0.4 | 7 | 0.7 | — | — |

[a] Ruth Reed, *The Illegitimate Family in New York City* (1934), p. 117. Reprinted by permission of Columbia University Press.

number are under twenty-five."[7] It is thus the young girl with most of her life before her who faces the difficult role of an unmarried mother.

*Family Relationships of the Unmarried Mother.* Two problems seem to be involved in a consideration of the family relationships of the unmarried mother: her own, prior and subsequent to the birth of the illegitimate baby, and that of the child. We have spoken throughout this chapter as though the mother of an illegitimate child and an unmarried mother were synonymous. Such is not quite the case. Of the 1,538 mothers of illegitimate children studied in New York City for whom marital status was known, 92 per cent were single.[8] Thus, the overwhelming majority of those giving birth to children out of wedlock are unwed. The others are married, widowed, divorced, or separated. A child born to a married woman through extra-marital relations may suffer less if he is taken back into his mother's home especially if he is assumed to be the child of the marriage and bears the family name. Situations

[7] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[8] Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

are so few in number where the mother of the illegitimate is or has been married that one has come rather loosely to consider only the problems of the unwed mother when discussing illegitimacy.

Studies regarding the social development and environmental history of the unmarried mother reveal that she is, on the whole, a deprived person. Frequently, she comes from a broken home, whose family lacked education and many of the essentials of life.[9] In some ethnic groups, codes of conduct place little or no stigma on free relationships between the sexes. These studies are colored somewhat by the fact that they deal with situations known to social agencies, so that undue weight is given to inadequacies in the parental home. We do know that many girls, as both Mildred and Ruth, come from average homes not marked by dependency or outward signs of social disintegration. We need, therefore, further studies of relationships and personality factors in order to reach definite conclusions on the problems in this field.

Even less is known of the other partner in the relationship, the father of the child. Just what factors contribute to his part in the relationship and his subsequent refusal to assume any responsibility are even less apparent than those influencing the mother. In the New York City study, Dr. Reed received data about 544 fathers, and found that 70 per cent were single and 26 per cent married, the remainder being divorced or separated.[10] The manner in which fathers usually efface themselves from the scene, and the lack of data regarding them in social agency records, mean that this is really an unexplored field, and discussion is mainly conjecture.

We have some data, however, on what becomes of the unmarried mother and her child. The solution she adopts and the plan she makes for taking up life with her associates depend to a large

[9] See Percy G. Kammerer, *The Unmarried Mother* (1918), a study of 500 cases; Charlotte Lowe, "The Intelligence and Social Background of the Unmarried Mother," *Mental Hygiene*, 11 (1927), 783–94, a study of 344 cases; Mabel Mattingly, *The Unmarried Mother and her Child* (1928), a study of 53 cases.

[10] Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

extent on previously formed ability to shape her relations to others. As might be anticipated, since they are a young group, most of the unmarried mothers marry subsequently, but rarely to the child's father. Miss Mattingly found in the 53 cases she investigated that 29 of the mothers married, only eight of them to the father of the child. In general, she did not consider the marriages highly successful, however, as she noted six divorces and other evidence of incompatibility in the remaining families. Of the 24 who were unmarried, 12 were working outside their own homes, but in these instances the child was in the maternal grandparents' home.[11] In another study, limited to mothers who retained the custody of their children, 143 out of a total of 253 mothers married, 23 of them to the child's father.[12] Of the 98 who did not marry, 34 returned to their parental homes, as did many of the others prior to matrimony.[13] Although these studies are only fragmentary and their degree of representativeness unknown, it is heartening that, amidst cases in which parental disapproval and community feeling run strong, many families weather the shock of their daughter's shame and receive her and sometimes her offspring into their midst.

The lot of the illegitimate child falls in one of four categories: (1) he is adopted or received into a foster family and becomes a member of that group; (2) he is placed in a foster home or institution by his mother who keeps in touch with him with varying degrees of happiness throughout the years; (3) he goes to live with his mother at her place of employment or in furnished rooms, or in a home of her own; (4) he returns with or without his mother to her family. Rarely does he have any contact with his father's people, although a few instances are known where the paternal grandparents have reared illegitimate children. In the second and third

[11] Mattingly, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

[12] A. Madorah Donahue, "Children of Illegitimate Birth Whose Mothers Have Kept Their Custody" (U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 190 [1928]), pp. 26–7.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 61–7.

instances, unless his mother marries and takes him into her home, he is deprived of a father person, which leaves a serious deficiency in a child's life. His relationships to his mother may leave much to be desired, as she usually has to work hard and may have to endure a great deal of condemnation from the community. Possibly the happier adjustments are in good foster homes or in the mother's parental home, where a more normal family life exists. Hazards in either of these two relationships pertain to acceptance accorded him by the family. His grandparents may work out on him their resentment toward his mother's folly. In a foster home, if his behavior does not turn out as anticipated, the facts of his birth may be thrown up to him. In any situation where a child does not know and see his mother and knows little about his father, he at some period usually wishes to get some information regarding them. Family attachment and blood ties are traditionally strong.

Miss Mattingly found that of the 58 children and 53 unmarried mothers whom she studied, 27, or about 50 per cent, were received into the homes of the mother's parents. All of these children were white, but there is a strong tendency among the Negroes to receive both the illegitimate child and its mother into the group without condemnation. Twenty-one of the children were with their mothers who had married, and seven of these had been adopted by the stepfathers. Four were with their mothers who had been married and divorced, two with their mothers who had been married and left their husband, retaining the children. The remaining four were boarded by their mothers, one in an orphanage, two in licensed boarding homes, and one in an institution.[14] All of the mothers in this small selected sample had retained the custody of their children. Of the 1,181 children from the New York study, whose whereabouts were recorded by the social agencies almost immediately after their birth, a similar situation prevails. As shown in Table 56, at least 88 per cent of the mothers were still with or in

[14] Mattingly, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

Table 56

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN CLASSIFIED BY WHEREABOUTS AS RECORDED BY SOCIAL AGENCIES [a]

| *Whereabouts* | *Number* | *Per Cent* |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 1,181 | 100.0 |
| Given for adoption | 74 | 6.3 |
| Own home [b] | 280 | 23.7 |
| Relatives' home | 275 | 23.3 |
| Boarding home | 128 | 10.8 |
| Institution | 357 | 30.2 |
| Other | 67 | 5.7 |

[a] Ruth Reed, *The Illegitimate Family in New York City* (1934), p. 199. Reprinted by permission of Columbia University Press.

[b] "Own home" indicates that the child was with his mother in the home of her parents, or with her in any home, not, however, with his mother in an institution.

touch with their children. In some instances, the mother was considering relinquishing custody of the child, but it had not yet been accomplished. A larger proportion than shown by other surveys were in institutions. If they remained there, they would be denied the experiences of family life. General impression has it that among girls of higher economic status who do not have recourse to social agencies, adoption is easily and quickly accomplished through connivance of family physician or well-paid maternity home, if abortion has not been successfully performed previously. A large number of adopted children are illegitimate, but, as we can see, of those illegitimates whom it has been possible to trace, by far the greater number are still with their mothers. The worst which these children and their mothers have to face is the social ostracism practiced by their associates, preventing them from enjoying normally friendly and informal contacts. Probably the child suffers more than the mother.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* In Dr. Reed's study of unmarried mothers in New York City, over half of the women for whom data on occupation were available were in domestic service at the time of conception. This high percentage leads one to hazard

Table 57

UNMARRIED MOTHERS, CLASSIFIED BY OCCUPATION AND COLOR [a]

| OCCUPATION | TOTAL | | WHITE | | NEGRO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* | *Number* | *Per Cent* |
| Total | 1,212 | 100.0 | 878 | 100.0 | 334 | 100.0 |
| Professional | 61 | 5.0 | 52 | 5.9 | 9 | 2.7 |
| Clerical | 215 | 17.7 | 211 | 24.0 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Domestic service | 631 | 52.1 | 386 | 44.0 | 245 | 73.3 |
| Factory | 196 | 16.2 | 164 | 18.7 | 32 | 9.6 |
| School | 87 | 7.2 | 48 | 5.5 | 39 | 11.7 |
| Miscellaneous | 22 | 1.8 | 17 | 1.9 | 5 | 1.5 |

[a] Ruth Reed, *The Illegitimate Family in New York City* (1934), p. 127. Reprinted by permission of Columbia University Press.

guesses about the susceptibility of girls in such positions, whether it is their drive to compensate for other pleasures lost, their desire for masculine attention, or whether in their position they are more open to advances. Next to domestics in importance are clerical and factory workers, with percentages of 17.7 and 16.2 respectively. Statistics from the New York City Health Department on 671 unmarried mothers, for the year 1930, showed a slightly different distribution, but here also domestic workers were in the majority, with 43.4 per cent of all cases. Clerical workers came next, with 30.3 per cent, a much higher figure than was apparent in the agency group.[15]

Similar studies on education of unmarried mothers reveal that, on the whole, formal schooling is meager. Regardless of what grade the girls may have achieved in school, mental tests have

[15] Reed, *op. cit.*, pp. 126–8.

shown that many are definitely feeble-minded or borderline cases. However, the proportions are not so great as many who seek simple causes for delinquency would wish to believe.[16]

This evidence regarding the background of the mothers is important in considering the question of what opportunities are open or denied to the mother and her child. We cannot assume that skilled or highly paid jobs would be open to many of the mothers, most of whom possess relatively limited skills, education, and general competence. Unmarried motherhood is then not the barrier to positions outside the mother's limited capacities. Most mothers seek employment in domestic service. They may expect to be successful in finding such jobs, as housework positions are always open. Others with higher skill may be forced into domestic service if financial pressure is great. Concealment of one's marital status is more possible in some occupational groups than among personal friends. We are in no position to evaluate the effect of illegitimacy as a bar to employment on the part of the mother or the child. By the time the latter is seeking work, his chances are more apt to depend upon his ability than upon the isolated factor of his birth. His handicap lies more in the damage done to his personality through whatever suffering he may have endured regarding his birth, and possibly insufficient or haphazard education and training to which he may have been subjected.

*Programs and Policies Protecting the Unmarried Mother.* Public recognition of the needs of the illegitimate has been concerned largely with health care for mother and child and legal provisions giving some measure of protection to the child. Since the disclosure in 1915 of abnormally high death rates among illegitimate children in Baltimore,[17] attention has been centered on improving the qualities of maternity-home care, and licensing of midwives. The

[16] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, pp. 258–9.

[17] "The Welfare of Infants of Illegitimate Birth in Baltimore" (U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 144 [1925]).

high mortality had been attributed to lack of prenatal care for the mothers, attempted abortions, and use of unskilled midwives and doctors for delivery. These often resulted from precautions taken by the mothers to keep the birth of their children secret, or because being under the necessity of working, they had undermined their own physical condition. Emphasis is now laid on prenatal and *post partum* care for the mother, the safe birth of the child, and, so far as possible, the assurance of a right start in life physically. Provisions under the Social Security Act of 1935 for better maternity care affect legitimate and illegitimate children alike. Other legal provisions have grown up in reference to the rights and privileges which an illegitimate child may enjoy. In most states, he does not have any right to inherit from the father, even though paternity may have been established in court. He can inherit from the mother, however. Nor does he have a legal right to the father's name. He has been excluded from the advantages of mothers' pensions, although more recent provisions of the law concerning aid to dependent children allow illegitimate children to share in such benefits. His birth record which is practically a public document bears witness to the bar sinister of his birth. Some attempts have been made, and are still under consideration, to allow the information to be recorded so that from the records no one need know the unhappy fact. Opponents, however, fear that so disguising the record will prevent the obtaining of important vital statistical information.

As for understanding the emotional component of what both child and mother suffer, we have much to learn. Social agencies have gone a long way in dealing with the mothers and children, but more understanding and appreciation of their anxieties, fears, and needs are required. The problem is further complicated by the fact that most of the mothers who come to the attention of social agencies are partially or wholly dependent for subsistence on public or private resources. Plans which might be possible for those who could pay their way financially are not possible for

public charges. Proceedings to get support from the alleged father are not allowable in all states and, even if they are possible, frequently come to naught. The amount of protection which such a child may claim is pitifully small. If the mother does not wish to relinquish the child and cannot support him, he must be committed to the state as a dependent.

## THE EX-CONVICT

Besides the sinning mother and her bastard, the ex-convict is another victim of society's disapproval and is frequently handicapped greatly by limited opportunity for social participation. He suffers a definite economic deprivation in the restricted job opportunities which are open to him owing to his prison experience. The case of Mr. Foster illustrates a man's struggle to regain his own and his family's self-respect and a place in the community.

### The Fosters

Mr. Foster had been married ten years and had one child when he was sent up to the "pen" for a ten-year "stretch." He felt there was some injustice in his conviction, and his wife was very bitter about it, but there was no evading the consequences, so he made the best of them. He was convicted of participating in an armed robbery. He and another fellow were returning home one night and both had been drinking. When stopping at a tavern for more drinks, his companion suddenly drew a gun and held up the owner. No one else was around at the time. Mr. Foster claimed he had not known his companion was going to do this, had not even been aware he had a gun with him. Still the facts were there: a robbery had been committed and he was part of it. The record of his partner was not good. Both were sentenced. Mr. Foster, however, was released for good behavior after somewhat more than half his sentence had been served.

Jerry Foster came from a middle-class family, well to do in a modest way. He received a high-school education, could have gone to college if he had so desired. He had always done well in school, and his parents had only one complaint that he seemed to be easily influenced and easily led. He was a "good fellow" and liked to travel with a gang. After

some little floundering, he obtained a well-paid white-collar job, married a girl with whom he had gone while in high school, and seemed to settle down a little. He was not a drinking man, although he did drink with the boys on occasions. His wife had never liked some of his associates whose reputations were not of the best, but he refused to give them up. He had been with one of these on the night of the robbery.

Mrs. Foster nearly went to pieces when Mr. Foster was sent up. Their boy Ned was only six, and Mrs. Foster in a panic told him his father was going to the hospital for a long time. Then she took him to his grandmother's to live. She went back to work. She could not feel resentful toward Jerry, but her family spoke most disparagingly of him and felt that she should get a divorce. Her mother was very nervous and became irritated with little Ned and the extra financial and other burdens placed on her and her husband because of their son-in-law's failure to live up to his obligations. Once, when she was very angry over some behavior of Ned, she told him his father was no good and in jail and that he would probably follow in his footsteps. This information, reluctantly confirmed by Mrs. Foster, was a blow between the eyes, as Ned had worshiped his jolly, fun-loving father, always ready to play with him, always patient with him. He became withdrawn, acted beaten and ashamed. Mrs. Foster was taxed to the utmost to help Ned who grew more pale and listless. She hardly felt she could get along without her mother's help. But as the latter continued to taunt the boy about his father, she realized the situation was impossible, sought help from a child-placing agency, and boarded the child in a foster home. The foster parents and the social worker, with Mrs. Foster's ready cooperation, tried to undo the harm which the grandmother had done the child, to get him to realize his father's side of the story, to recall to him his father as he knew him. He finally went with his mother to visit his father, began writing letters, planned with his mother for the father's return. He kept his father informed of all the little outings he went on, of his playmates, his prowess at school, his new clothes. "I don't know what I would have done without Ned's letters," Mr. Foster frequently said.

It was a glad day for all when Mr. Foster was released on parole. The family went to their own little flat which Mrs. Foster had secured and furnished mostly with secondhand articles. It was far from former friends and acquaintances. Mr. Foster came out with a good recom-

mendation from the prison. Still his search for a job proved desperate and disheartening. Everywhere he applied, he was asked for references, and he had no recent one except from the prison. Finally, he obtained manual work as handy man around a small factory. With a steady job and regular wages, he gained some confidence, but his wife complained that he still felt hunted and afraid. He stayed at home all the time he was not working, claiming he felt safer. He did not want to do anything which might endanger his parole and give the police and the probation officers any chance to criticize him. He could not get over the feeling he was watched constantly; he dreaded contacts with his fellows, lest they find out his past and shun him. He felt inhibited, withdrawn from his natural associates.

The family was living by the most rigid economy since Mrs. Foster gave up her position. Yet the home life was very pleasant. Occasionally, however, when his father sought to correct him, Ned would say, "You're no one to tell me what to do." This hurt Jerry Foster bitterly, but he finally was able to reply to his son that he was just the one to correct him and tell him what to do, that he might not make the mistake his father had. On the whole, he and Ned were very attached to each other, and Mr. Foster took great pride in his boy's scholastic achievements and his athletic exploits.

After a year on his job, he proved himself useful and dependable. He had been given the general janitorial work of the building. He was liked by all the workers and his boss, particularly for the businesslike and efficient way he handled his duties and himself. His employer discovered that he had had some previous business experience, and, as a vacancy occurred in the selling line, offered him a chance to try his hand at this. The confidence displayed in him by this offer was a source of great satisfaction to Mr. Foster who had been striving so hard, but his conscience would not let him take on the responsibility without telling his employer of his background. Although his employer maintained that he still trusted him, he did not give him the new opening. He still had his old job, but somehow the flavor had gone out of it. When an opening occurred as janitor at another place, he took it. With two fairly good work records, Jerry Foster sought better employment. The social workers who had known Mrs. Foster, impressed with his genuine struggle to maintain a home and become self-supporting, sought to enlist public-spirited citizens in the community to give Mr. Foster a better job. They

spoke of his post-prison record, the pleasantness of his home, the hard work and dependability exerted by Mr. Foster. Their efforts proved unavailing. Those approached appeared interested, professed themselves willing to help, but never seemed to find just the right job. The agency gave up its efforts, and Mr. Foster remained a janitor.

When his final release was granted and his parole finished, he felt an occasion for further rejoicing. He could now permanently close his connection with the prison. He could consider himself a free agent. But he had changed greatly during his years in prison and on parole, from a gay and debonair young fellow to a prematurely gray and lined man, inclined to worry, shy, reserved. But he said with a slow smile that he had much to be thankful for; he was free once more; he had a job such as it was, obtained by his own efforts; he was not in debt; he had a grand wife and a fine son; and what more could a man ask?

Society's reaction to the ex-convict is illustrated in the story of Mr. Foster. Despite some interest in alleviating his lot, society is inherently distrustful of the lawbreaker. The world places a severe handicap on the ex-convict who seeks to erase his past and make good, seemingly unable to realize what changes must have taken place within the unfortunate individual. After he offended against the criminal code, was apprehended and sentenced, he must get accustomed to locks and bars, the constant supervision of armed guards, the necessity of obeying orders, the absence of both privacy and freedom, new kinds of food, new conditions of work or idleness or both. Presently he becomes identified with his fellow prisoners. He is a member of the convict group. Once outside the prison, the situation is quite changed. He is again in a hostile community, where he is distrusted and must win his way anew into the respect of his family, friends, neighbors, and work associates, and try to make his living again. This represents a challenge to the community as well as to the prisoner. Former Attorney General Homer Cummings has stated this challenge very concisely:

It has only been in recent years—very recent years—that we have come to comprehend the challenge which prisons present in our cul-

ture. The awakening comes inevitably if we inquire about our prisoners. Who are they? What happens to them? The answer—I'll give it to you—they all come out! Well, at least 99 per cent of them. Of the 16,000 Federal prisoners confined in our institutions last year only 79 died. Yes, they come out—back to live in your neighborhood, to walk beside you on the street, even to join your church. Their children will associate with your children, their families will be a part of your community. If men don't die in prison they must live—and die—after they leave prison. And that, my friends, is the challenge of the prison system. We cannot escape it and we simply must face it.[18]

During his whole trying experience, the faith of one's family helps the prisoner to maintain his morale, his interest in the world outside, as Mr. Foster was cheered by his wife's loyalty and the visits with his child. Any little successes achieved after release mean more than many a promotion to a person who has never had a prison experience. All social groups seem suspicious and are not eager to welcome the ex-convict to their ranks. On his part, the prisoner, as with Mr. Foster, may be afraid and ashamed to go outside his home. In addition to a belief that he is constantly under surveillance by the police, he feels he is not wanted as a companion or as an employee by anyone who knows his past. The disgrace of the prisoner is visited upon his family also, the members being frequently banned because of a kinsman's misfortune. To avoid as much unpleasantness as possible, moving to a new neighborhood and forming new friends are devices employed to relieve the family of the social stigma.

*Extent of the Problem.* On January 1, 1937, there were 145,038 prisoners in state and Federal prisons and reformatories in the United States.[19] This number does not include those incarcerated

[18] Homer Cummings, "They All Come Out," *Federal Probation*, 2 (1938), 1.

[19] *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories, 1937* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 1. Inmates of prisons in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi are not included.

in county and city jails and workhouses where offenders are confined according to various state and local laws, but mainly for offenses less serious and with sentences of shorter duration than those which carry with them terms in state and Federal prisons. On December 31, 1937, there were in the same institutions, 149,921 prisoners. During the year, 71,110 persons had been committed and 65,302 had been discharged.[20] It is these latter in whom we are chiefly interested—those who came out.

Women represent only a small fraction of the prison population, only three and five-tenths per cent of prisoners in institutions January 1, 1937, being women.[21] Numerically this makes the prison experience and its aftermath primarily a man's problem. Both male and female prisoners are young. The proportion of prisoners committed by courts during 1937 who were under 30 years of age was 57.7 per cent among men and 54.7 per cent among women. The median age for felony cases was 27.9 years among the males and 28.9 among the females.[22] We do not have corresponding information regarding ages of prisoners released. The median time served by those released in 1937, however, was 18.8 months, and the average time served was 27.3 months.[23] Inasmuch as entering prisoners have been found for several years to be of the same approximate ages, the presumption that they are still young on release is justified. As with other traits of a complex civilization, the urban rate is higher than the rural, partly because the criminal comes to the city to commit his crime and has more chance of escaping detection. The native-born white person is the greatest offender. In 1937, 67.8 per cent of prisoners sentenced by courts were native-born whites. Negroes represented only 25.9 per cent of the total number.[24] However, this is a disproportionate share

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 1.
[21] *Loc. cit.*
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

of the total, for Negroes constitute only 10 per cent of the general population.

We are most interested in the 65,000 persons released in 1937 (for example) who went back into the community, some entirely free agents, others under the supervision of the parole authorities. Table 58 shows the proportions released in 1937 for specified rea-

Table 58

CONDITION OF DISCHARGE OF PRISONERS, 1937 [a]

| *Condition of Discharge* | *Number of Prisoners* | *Per Cent* |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 65,302 | 100.0 |
| Unconditional discharges | 24,408 | 37.4 |
| Expiration of sentence | 24,024 | 36.8 |
| Pardon | 155 | 0.2 |
| Commutation | 229 | 0.4 |
| Conditional discharges | 37,415 | 57.3 |
| Parole | 27,328 | 41.8 |
| Conditional pardon | 1,411 | 2.2 |
| Other conditional discharge | 8,676 | 13.3 |
| Escape | 1,335 | 2.0 |
| Execution | 102 | 0.2 |
| Death, except execution | 1,082 | 1.7 |
| Other discharges | 960 | 1.5 |

[a] *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories, 1937* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1938]), p. 4.

sons. The greatest number have either served out their sentence or are released on parole, the parolees outnumbering those unconditionally discharged by 27,000 to 24,000. The paroled prisoners will be under more or less strict supervision, depending on the parole standards of the particular state or community in which the prisoner is released. They bring back a variety of emotions influencing their conduct in the community. Some have a burning

resentment against the forces which restrained them, and are out to beat the law. Others feel that there is nothing more to live for. Some make adequate adjustments and get into no further trouble with the authorities.

Many return to prison at some subsequent time. Recidivism rates of discharged prisoners have been impressive, as shown in certain follow-up studies cited later, but the public confuses all persons returned, to whatever type of penal institution, with paroled prisoners, and condemns a system for faults not its own. The prisoner who has completed his sentence is more apt to return later after committing another offense than the parolee who stands to be instantly reincarcerated without trial if he commits an offense while on parole. Of the 71,110 admissions to prisons in 1937, only about 6,000, or eight per cent, were parole violators returned. But of those 65,000 received from the courts, 49 per cent had been in a jail or juvenile institution or had served one or more prison terms previously.[25] The men and women do come back in large numbers. We do not know enough of the reasons why. We should learn more of their ability to get along with their fellow men prior to incarceration, their personality, antisocial tendencies, the effect of the unnatural group life of the prison, and their reabsorption into the community. We have only begun to assume a helpful attitude toward the prisoner, our conventional attitude being to make him pay again and again for his crime.

*Family Relationships of the Prisoner.* Most of the prisoners enter the institution single persons. This is not surprising considering they are, on the whole, a young group. Fifty per cent of those received from courts in 1937 were single, and 42 per cent were married. The remainder were either widowed or divorced.[26] A prison sentence does not necessarily prove a detriment to marriage, as many, particularly of the women prisoners, subsequently marry.

[25] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[26] Loc. cit.

Among the most thorough follow-up studies of ex-convicts are that made by Dr. and Mrs. Glueck of 500 male prisoners discharged from a Massachusetts Reformatory, and a similar study of 500 women discharged from a women's reformatory. The former was carried on at two intervals, after a five-year period and again after a ten-year period.[27] Of the 454 men about whom data were finally available, 411 were single at the time of release, only 187 were single five years later, and 157 at the end of ten years. Some of those who had been married were divorced, remarried, or separated. The numbers with shifting marital relationships were not large.[28] Among the women offenders, the proportion who married subsequently was higher at the end of a five-year period, and a larger percentage, 43.5 per cent as compared with 39.9 per cent, were living with their husbands. Only 16.2 per cent of the women were single as compared with 38.2 per cent of the men, after a ten-year period.[29] The results of these two studies are compared in Table 59.

But the mere fact of living with a spouse does not give us much idea of the adjustments involved or the relationships between the mates. Although realizing the subjective nature of much of their material, Dr. and Mrs. Glueck did examine the success of the marital ventures. Here a rather negative criterion was used, in that illicit sex relationships were regarded as an indication of failure, although in some instances they apparently did not affect the relationships between the marriage partners. Many more sex irregularities were found among the women ex-prisoners than among the men, presumably connected with the fact that 98 per cent of the women had indulged in some form of illicit sexual activity prior to commitment. The men were slightly better able to adjust

[27] Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, *500 Criminal Careers* (1930); *Later Criminal Careers* (1937); *Five Hundred Delinquent Women* (1934).

[28] Glueck, *Later Criminal Careers*, p. 32.

[29] Figures for the women from Glueck, *Five Hundred Delinquent Women*, p. 523, and for the men from *Later Criminal Careers*, p. 332.

Table 59

MARITAL STATUS OF EX-PRISONERS BEFORE COMMITMENT AND AFTER DISCHARGE

In per cent

| MARITAL STATUS | WOMEN [a] | | MEN [b] | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Before Commitment* | *5 Years after Discharge* | *Before Commitment* | *5 Years after Discharge* | *10 Years after Discharge* |
| Single | 48.8 | 16.2 | 90.9 | 45.2 | 38.2 |
| Married, living with spouse | 8.9 | 43.5 | 5.3 | 38.4 | 39.9 |
| Separated | 36.7 | 28.5 | 2.4 | 8.7 | 10.2 |
| Divorced | 3.2 | 8.0 | 0.4 | 3.9 | 6.4 |
| Widowed | 2.4 | 3.8 | 1.0 | 1.7 | 1.5 |
| Other [c] | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.1 | 3.8 |
| Total Number included | 494 | 423 | 452 | 414 | 410 |

[a] Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, *Five Hundred Delinquent Women* (1934), p. 523. By permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

[b] Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, *Later Criminal Careers* (1937), p. 332. By permission of The Commonwealth Fund.

[c] Includes cases of men married, but in an institution, or men illegally married.

themselves to the family groups, as 50 per cent were rated as successful in this area compared with 43 per cent of the women.[30] An improvement in the women's ability to make a home and bring up children was shown compared to their former ability. How much of this might be due to their increasing maturity, to habits learned while incarcerated, to a desire to have their children do better than they did, to a number of other circumstances, we do not know. Although these two studies cover only a relatively small number of ex-prisoners, they are noted for their thoroughness and penetration. Their evidence seems to point to the fact that a prison term is no barrier to successful marriage in about 50 per cent of the cases.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 523 and 333.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* One of the most difficult problems which an ex-convict must face is that of employment opportunity. Although in many prisons and penitentiaries the prisoner receives some vocational training, and although many of these institutions and many parole boards go through the motions of trying to place prisoners in employment, the job problem is met in a most unsatisfactory manner. While incarcerated, prisoners are expected to carry on the many services in the kitchen and about the yard or farm. Making of mattresses and various other types of shopwork which have been provided to keep the prisoners from being idle are opposed on the grounds that convicts should not enter competitive industry or even be employed making articles which the prison might otherwise have to purchase.

One condition of granting parole has sometimes been the promise of a position for the prisoner. In some instances, unscrupulous friends will offer jobs which are really nothing but a ruse to get the prisoner out. At other times, manufacturers and employers of labor will take prisoners and exploit them, feeling, alas with some social approval, that they may overwork and underpay them because, after all, society won't give them a chance elsewhere. The government itself has not opened its doors to parolees and ex-convicts; even the C.C.C. camps were closed to persons on probation or parole. Well-meaning individuals who are interested in giving some of these persons jobs usually do not keep these opportunities open very long. Lack of sufficient employment may lead to a prisoner's falling back upon undesirable associates and seeking to earn a living in questionable ways, eventually landing him back behind the bars.

For those who continue to stay in the community, work has been found, although frequently in different occupations from those which they pursued previously. Among the male prisoners followed by the Gluecks, for example, there was no period of idleness reported among those still in the community after five years,

but 3.8 per cent were idle after the second five-year period, which ended during the depression. Whereas none had been listed prior to commitment as having engaged in illegal occupations, 7.2 per cent and 6.4 were so listed after the first and second five-year periods respectively. Fewer were able to find factory work and farmwork, but more had found work in the skilled trades than had done so prior to commitment. Little change was apparent in the proportions holding jobs at common labor, trucking, and restaurant work. These figures covered about 350 of the 500 men.[31] The work histories of the men showed considerable improvement as time passed. Employment increased in regularity, and an improvement was noted in work habits. The wages of the men were not very high on the average; relatively few held skilled positions from which one might expect good remuneration. The average weekly wage of somewhat over 200 men for whom information was known was $26.45 after the first five years and $25.25 after ten years. The decrease may again be laid at the doors of the depression.[32] These figures certainly show that despite their handicaps, as time went on, many ex-convicts were able to establish industrial connections. Moreover, many at the last counting were able to maintain themselves independent of help from social agencies. But 243 were listed as living on marginal incomes, and only 34 on comfortable incomes.[33]

Fewer of the women were working five years after release. Twenty-two and a half per cent were doing their own housework, and 3.4 per cent were idle. A substantial percentage, 14.8, were supporting themselves by illegitimate occupations. A decrease, similar to that noted among the men, was found in those doing factory work five years after release as compared with their previous employment. Slightly more were engaged in restaurant work.

[31] Glueck, *Later Criminal Careers*, p. 335.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 336–7.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 334.

Weekly earnings were low both prior to commitment and after release into the community, being $11.25 and $13.10 respectively. Altogether, the women's industrial history was less favorable than the men's. Only 25 per cent were considered to have good work habits. Considerable occupational instability was evident. In summarizing a number of elements, the writers judged that 49 per cent of the 269 working women were failures.[34]

These figures are significant in showing that ultimately the rebuffs of society to the prisoner may be overcome. They must not be regarded too optimistically, however, for they cover only those who were employed when the study was made. Unemployment is an all too common experience of the ex-prisoner. As a majority of prisoners do not have any long experience in industry or in skilled trades, it cannot be expected that they will be able to earn much, with the present keen industrial competition and their prison background as a deterrent. That many do find a place and become self-supporting is hopeful.

*General Social and Community Relationships.* In many individual instances, we know that ex-convicts are not received into the community. They are not invited to neighbors' homes, their children are not allowed to play with other children. They feel apart from the life around them. The Gluecks, in their comprehensive studies, attempted to get at some of these factors in two ways: (1) by inquiring about the use of leisure time, habits, and companionships of the ex-prisoners and (2) by examining the number of arrests and antisocial acts performed. In brief, they found, for both men and women, that companionship sought was harmful, that habits were bad, that favorite haunts were unhealthy, that use of leisure was not constructive, that church attendance was irregular, if any, and that educational activities were nil. Some of these facts are presented in Table 60. This evidence represents these per-

[34] Glueck, *Five Hundred Delinquent Women*, pp. 529–31.

Table 60

## HABITS, COMPANIONS, AND LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF EX-PRISONERS

(in per cent)

| ITEMS | WOMEN [a] | MEN [b] | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *5 years after discharge* | *5 years after discharge* | *10 years after discharge* |
| 1. Leisure and habits | | | |
| Constructive | 2.7 | 4.7 | 4.3 |
| Negative | 30.6 | 26.0 | 29.9 |
| Harmful | 66.7 | 69.3 | 65.8 |
| 2. Recreational and educational interests [c] | | | |
| Constructive | 4.3 | 4.0 | 5.6 |
| Not Constructive | 95.7 | 96.0 | 94.4 |
| 3. Church Attendance | | | |
| Regular | 16.0 | 12.6 | 12.0 |
| Irregular | 46.7 | 43.5 | 40.4 |
| None | 37.3 | 43.9 | 47.6 |
| 4. Companions | | | |
| Harmless | 37.3 | 31.4 | 37.0 |
| Harmful | 62.7 | 68.6 | 63.0 |
| 5. Haunts | | | |
| Harmless | 48.8 | 32.0 | 38.5 |
| Harmful | 51.2 | 68.0 | 61.5 |
| 6. Habits | | | |
| None bad | 23.4 | [d] | [d] |
| Bad | 76.6 | [d] | [d] |

[a] Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, *Five Hundred Delinquent Women* (1934), pp. 532–3. By permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

[b] Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, *Later Criminal Careers* (1937), pp. 338–9. By permission of The Commonwealth Fund.

[c] Heading in former study, "recreational interests"; in latter, "educational activity."

[d] No such heading used.

sons as definitely unsocial. Again, we cannot assign definite causes for this, although doubtless society's hostility and the offenders' personal inadequacies are in part responsible.

A number of each group offended against the criminal code again and returned to prison. During the second period, a total of 955 arrests were made among the men prisoners studied, but only 200 persons were involved in the crimes committed. Predominant offenses were drunkenness, crimes against property and the public health and safety. Commitments were made for 282 of the offenses. The average frequency of arrest was one in 12.5 months. Yet even with this record of delinquencies, there was some improvement with time. During the second period, 118 men were clearly nondelinquent as compared with only 89 during the first five-year period.[35]

The number of formal arrests was less among the women, as 62 per cent were not arrested at all, the remainder being arrested an average of 3.2 times each. Most of these led to convictions followed by sentences. The crimes were sex offenses in over half of the cases. One quarter more were for sex and alcoholism. These two types of offenses constituted the chief departures from expected conduct.[36] Conduct of the women was, on the whole, unsatisfactory, however, even though arrest and conviction did not take place. The writers found only about one seventh of the women, 15.2 per cent of all, who were entirely nondelinquent after release from parole or expiration of the sentence.[37]

By no means have we achieved a satisfactory solution to the problem of social participation of the ex-convict. He seems on the whole unwelcome except among undesirable associates. He is apparently unable to utilize his leisure constructively, to keep out of trouble for any length of time. Yet some among the number leav-

[35] Glueck, *Later Criminal Careers*, pp. 62–7, 340–5.
[36] Glueck, *Five Hundred Delinquent Women*, pp. 534–9.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 251.

ing prison each year make commendable citizens, are able to live happily with their families and neighbors. To learn what elements produce the differences in subsequent adjustments is occupying the time of many prison officials, sociologists, and psychologists, on the theory that if future conduct can be predicted and anticipated, the more promising prisoners may be paroled sooner and with greater safety.[38] The potential recidivists can be kept in prison longer or possibly be given some treatment which will make them better risks and social assets.

*Programs and Policies.* We seem to be in the trial-and-error stage in providing better opportunities for the ex-convict in his social life after prison. The largest offensive has been directed toward establishing an effective parole system for prisoners before their sentence has expired. This movement is based on the assumption that, under a system whereby the prisoner is released under supervision until his full time is expired, the prison officials and parole officers can watch him closely, and, at the same time, he is assisted to make an adjustment in the community. Some studies have shown that this is effective, and that recidivism is greater for persons serving their full sentence than among paroled persons. Arguments in favor of parole have in addition claimed it offers the prisoner an incentive for good behavior and sends him out with an obligation rather than a score to settle.[39] Failures of parole have been demonstrated to be not necessarily inherent in the aims and goals set up, but in the practical administration. Parole departments are often inadequately staffed, with poorly trained personnel, and too many prisoners to look after. Parole boards, with

[38] The Gluecks started working toward such an end, with their estimates of factors making for parole success. Professor Burgess of Chicago has done some work along the line of parole prediction. See Sheldon and Eleanor T. Glueck, *Later Criminal Careers* (1937), chap. IX, pp. 98–106; Ernest W. Burgess, "Is Prediction Feasible in Social Work?" *Social Forces*, 7 (1929), 533–45; also Ferris F. Laune, "The Application of Attitude Tests in the Field of Parole Prediction," *American Sociological Review*, 1 (1936), 781–96.

[39] See Sanford Bates, *Prisons and Beyond* (1936), pp. 245–66.

which is vested the right of granting the conditional release, lack background, training, and experience for their tasks. Some have not been above political corruption. But the more competent administrations would indicate that parole systems might go far to adjust the discharged prisoner to his environment with a greater degree of success than heretofore.

Along with the strong parole movement has gone a gradual reorganization of prison programs. Prisoners are studied as individuals with different abilities, attitudes, interests, needs. The prison life is regarded as an opportunity for doing more for the offender than simply segregating him from society. It is intended to rehabilitate him, prepare him later to play an acceptable role in the community. This is compatible with the primary aim of any penal system which is the protection of society against the forces of crime and lawlessness.

Other efforts to facilitate the absorption of the ex-convict into the social order have involved obtaining sponsors among the responsible citizenry for each prisoner, to see that he has a job and try to instill faith in the prisoner. Efforts of some social agencies are also directed toward aiding the adjustment of the returned prisoner as well as helping the family in its emotional crisis when he leaves home. We are certainly considering the prisoner more as a human being despite flagrant relapses.

## Suggested Readings

*The Unmarried Mother*

Donahue, A. Madorah, "Children of Illegitimate Birth Whose Mothers Have Kept Their Custody," U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 190. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1928. Case study of 253 mothers, known to social agencies, who maintained the custody and care of their children, with illustrative examples of how they managed.

Reed, Ruth, *The Illegitimate Family in New York City*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1934. Resources for the care of illegiti-

mates in New York and a study of all illegitimate children born in that city during 1930. Annotated bibliography.

*Social Work Year Book, 1939,* "Illegitimacy as a Child Welfare Problem," pp. 70–2. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1939. Brief account of measures of protection for illegitimate children.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *Dependent and Neglected Children,* vol. IV-C-1, "Children Born out of Wedlock," pp. 251–73. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933. Extent of illegitimacy, social implications, and special treatment. References.

*The Ex-Convict*

American Prison Association, *Proceedings of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Congress.* New York: American Prison Association, 1938. Section on Parole, pp. 369–406. Discusses problems of parole as currently presented.

Bates, Sanford, *Prisons and Beyond.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936. Firsthand account of actual prison procedure, defects of systems, philosophy of measures tried, of crime prevention, impact of prisoner and community.

Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor T., *Five Hundred Delinquent Women.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1934. Painstaking follow-up study of 500 women discharged from a reformatory, five years after release.

Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor T., *Later Criminal Careers.* New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1937. Comparison of adjustment in the community of 500 discharged prisoners, after five- and ten-year periods.

Sutherland, Edwin H., *Principles of Criminology.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1934. Chaps. XXIII–XXVII, pp. 473–596. Good summary of problems of the prisoners when released. References.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Interview a parole officer; ask him what difficulties are encountered in finding employment, living quarters, and recreation for parolees. What problems of family relations are met? How are these various difficulties overcome; i. e., how frequently, how completely, and by what means?

2. Interview a case worker in an agency that serves unmarried mothers and their children; ask the same questions. Inquire further how frequently such mothers keep their children, marry the fathers of the children, surrender the children for adoption, bring suit to establish paternity and compel support. Are instances definitely known in which the fact of illegitimacy has been used to obstruct social participation of a child or adult? Instances in which such hampering has occurred apart from anyone's intent and perhaps without initial awareness?

3. Consult U. S. Census, *Births, Stillbirths, and Infant Mortality*, for the most recent year available. Compare illegitimacy rates in the nearest city and the state with others. What factors may affect the differences? Consult publications of the U. S. Children's Bureau for additional data, such as race and age of mothers.

4. From the appropriate state department, secure data about prisoners in state and local penal institutions, persons on probation and parole. Note especially the number of offenders released each year, their age, sex, occupation, and marital status. What is the program for follow-up and supervision of parolees in your state? How does it operate in aiding or hindering the released convict in his social relationships? What provisions are made, if any, to help the prisoner with his problems of social adjustment, through social agencies, employment bureaus, and other organizations?

5. Make a study of prostitutes similar to the studies of unmarried mothers and ex-convicts described in the text. Among others consult the following works:

Walter C. Reckless, *Vice in Chicago*, which describes the changing character of prostitution over a twenty-year period.

W. C. Waterman, *Prostitution and its Repression in New York City*, which covers a thirty-year period.

6. Go through newspaper and magazine files of the current year and of an earlier year, e. g., 1920. List all references to unmarried mothers, illegitimate children, ex-convicts, parolees, and prostitutes. Classify the indicated attitudes as: strongly condemning, mildly condemning, impartial, charitable, approving. Compare the frequency with which given types of attitudes are indicated in the two years.

7. Devise a scale to measure attitudes toward unmarried mothers, illegitimate children, ex-convicts, possibly with short accounts of type situations designed to show tolerance, hostility, acceptance. See question-

naire used by Wortman in seeking attitudes toward syphilis, also Geo. A. Lundberg, *Social Research*, chap. 9, "Measurement of Attitudes."

8. Consult employers of commercial and industrial establishments regarding any fixed employment policies toward ex-convicts. Secure data from Federal employment offices regarding placement problems and the number of known ex-convicts placed.

## *Chapter 19*

# PERSONAL STIGMA AND DETERIORATION: ALCOHOLICS AND DRUG ADDICTS

IN the preceding chapter, we considered two sets of circumstances involving violation of the mores and social ostracism. We found that persons overstepping certain bounds, moral and legal, are commonly visited with scorn and condemnation which set them somewhat apart from other people. In this chapter, we are dealing with two sets of circumstances in which certain habits are frequently associated both with moral disapproval and with personal deterioration. In using the terms alcoholism and drug addiction, we have particular reference to those whose indulgence is generally admitted to be excessive, physically damaging, and difficult to control. We are all aware of the fact that moderate drinking of wine or beer is quite in accord with the mores of some peoples; hence, it entails for them no direct exclusion from group life. We have been informed that there are persons who use narcotics without apparent injury to their bodies and without the knowledge of their associates; obviously no social stigma is attached to them on this account. These are not the objects of our present study. Our concern is with those who are believed to be physically harmed by their consumption of alcoholic beverages, opium derivatives, and other narcotics, and especially with those who are socially stigmatized by reason of their indulgence.

## ALCOHOLISM

### D. H., A Chronic Alcoholic [1]

D. H. is the product of [superior] environment. Wealth, social position, and luxury were his birthright, and he went through preparatory school and college with a careless ease which expected and found only pleasure in life. Although he was only thirty-seven when he came to me, his alcoholic history dated back more than twenty years to his school days. In his younger years, however, his drinking was not a serious problem; then he drank simply because in his set it was the thing to do.

He received his first jolt when his previously indulgent father, who had been watching his last two college years with considerable anxiety, suddenly announced that it was time that D. H. "made a man" of himself and buckled down to work. Instead of setting out on the cruise he had planned, D. H. found to his disgust that he was expected to fill a job as runner in the brokerage and banking house of which his father was head. To his credit be it said that he tackled this and subsequent jobs in the statistical and sales departments with an energy that must have justified his father's secret hope that he had "stuff" in him. But his week-ends, spent mainly in golfing and drinking at the country club, were the real high spots of what to him was an otherwise humdrum grind. He worked only, he assured me, because of necessity and of a certain sporting feeling toward the "old man." Once the office door closed on him, he did all he could to carry on the careless round of pleasure which had constituted his previous existence.

At twenty-four D. H. became engaged to an attractive girl of his own set, knowing that he could not support her, but confident that his father would "come across." The father did. With marriage D. H. now began a life, which, expanding as the Great Boom got under way, can best be described as one big party. Confident that it would last, he was left completely demoralized by the inevitable crash. The father's concern was left solvent, but shaky, and his health so shattered that he died soon after.

The last part of the story is one of bewilderment and impractical retrenchment, with more and more recourse to the bottle as the easiest escape. D. H. says that he does not know how he survived the next few

[1] Chas. H. Durfee, "Understanding the Drinker," *Mental Hygiene*, 20 (1936), 18–19. By permission of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

years. By the time he came to me he was in a somewhat better situation financially, but physically and nervously he was a wreck. He was drinking well over a quart of whisky a day.

The diagnosis in this case must be apparent. Here was a man who had real ability, but who was so conditioned to expect things to come to him without effort that he was completely unprepared to meet reverses. Moreover, his habit patterns of drinking, established over years, practically determined the only course his life could take. His case is by no means unusual; there is a whole class of post-war youngsters of a certain social stratum who were reared to accept the gilded years thoughtlessly as their natural heritage and who today are stranded, unequipped to meet the sober realities of our time.

D. H.'s rehabilitation came about first of all through a frank discussion of his pampered and indulged childhood and youth, in which he came to see himself as the product of an upbringing that had failed to develop in him a sense of purpose and direction and effective habits of work and to interpret his present situation as the result of his play-boy attitude toward life. To facilitate the breaking up of the old conditioning processes associated with his past environment, it was suggested that he make a change for a time from his still comparatively luxurious surroundings to a more primitive setting in the country. First and foremost, he had to find his way to the fundamental simplicities of life. In the daily routine of farm life, where the accomplishment of even the humblest job was part of the joy and zest of living, he experienced the wholesome flavor of real work and that deep satisfaction which comes only from utter absorption in the task at hand. Work to him had always been just a necessary and tiresome interruption of his play. Now he saw it with adult eyes as something of meaning in and of itself. Gradually he came to realize the creative possibilities even of his business, and to visualize investment "service" as something more than a mere phrase.

His drinking, once he had tapered himself off under the therapist's supervision, gradually projected itself less and less into his life as a problem. By the time he returned to his home and took up the threads of his normal life, his attitude toward all his former problems had changed, and his old habit patterns were so submerged and replaced by new and positive ones that alcohol had dropped into the background. As he himself put it, he simply did not think of it any more.

*Nature and Causes of Alcoholism.* On the physical side, alcohol is variously regarded as food, drug, and poison. However, its food value is narrowly limited, and its use in the treatment of disease is even more so.[2] Taken in sufficient quantity, it constitutes a poison, although the amount required to produce poisoning varies greatly with the general health and activity of the drinker.[3] From the standpoint of social psychology, drink is often part of an escape mechanism. It is a device for evading unpleasant circumstances which seem to be beyond control. These may involve failure of any sort, loss of a loved one, chronic illness, marital discord, monotonous work, a feeling of inferiority. This point of view has been stated in the form of questions by the psychiatrist Campbell.

. . . Chronic alcoholism has been a distressing personal and social symptom. The treatment has been prohibition. The question of why the individual reached out for this chemical stimulant has been a matter of secondary interest. Was it a morbid craving, a manifestation of original sin; or was it a habit casually acquired, but difficult to break; or was it one way of getting cheaply a sort of satisfaction that none of the ordinary opportunities of life offered him? Did the alcohol dull vague feelings of depression and discontent, and perhaps in addition supply a glorious feeling of satisfaction and raise him into a different world from the humdrum atmosphere of the factory and the depressing atmosphere of the crowded home, with the careworn housewife and the noisy children? The alcohol satisfied some cravings apparently, only temporarily, it is true, and in the long run at a great price, the price of deterioration of character; but the cravings of the individual, the longings for some sort of exhilaration and freedom from care, were perhaps fundamental human traits that found little means of honest satisfaction in other directions. Did the chronic alcoholic live in a community that offered him decent opportunities for satisfaction along healthy lines, and had he been trained during his developing years to be able to utilize these sources of satisfaction? If the community offered few worthy opportunities for

[2] Haven Emerson, *Alcohol, Its Effects on Man* (1934), pp. 25–30, 55–9.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 63–74.

pleasure and recreation, then the chronic alcoholism could be looked upon as symptomatic of a faulty community organization. It is, of course, comforting for the community to be able to lay the blame on the alcoholic, and to be blind to the fact that we are partly responsible for the organization of the community. But it is surely not enough to punish the alcoholic or segregate him or banish his liquor; the fundamental problem is not dealt with until we know the condition of which the alcoholism is merely a symptom. . . .[4]

The passage just quoted from Dr. Campbell suggests some of the factors which may underlie the habitually excessive use of alcohol. But before pushing this inquiry further, it may be profitable to discover why people drink at all, in order to differentiate more clearly between the "moderate drinker" and the "drunkard." The use of alcoholic beverages may begin with the more or less accidental discovery of the keen, temporary pleasures associated therewith. Participants enjoy not only the taste and other physical sensations, but frequently genial comradeship as well. In many groups, drinking is one of the folkways. Wine with meals in Latin countries, beer gardens in Germany, the cocktail hour and the "treating" custom in America symbolize social customs widely—though not universally—approved. Growing up where such folkways prevail, one is very likely to conform. Another explanation may be offered in terms of ignorance. Alcohol is supposed by many to possess beneficial qualities with which it is not endowed. Some men engaged in heavy manual labor imagine that they can better perform their tasks if they have frequent draughts of beer or whisky. In areas where prohibition is the law, some people consider it "smart" to defy the law, and drink liquors whose chemical analysis would probably startle them. However, in all lands only a minority—usually a small minority—may be considered alcoholics or "problem drinkers." To account for them, attention must be given

[4] C. Macfie Campbell, "Mental Hygiene in Industry," *Mental Hygiene*, 5 (1921), 472–3. By permission of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

not only to social customs and personal thwarting but also to individual constitutions.

Dr. Healy, who is in no wise an extremist, has said that "anyone who has even half studied human inebriety must have reached the conclusion that many alcoholics are defective or insane." [5] In support of this we have evidence from Dr. Anderson's studies in the Municipal Court in Boston.[6] He found that of 100 habitual and periodic drinkers who had been repeatedly arrested, 37 seemed to be feeble-minded, 7 were "insane," 7 were epileptic, and 32 showed evidence of an "innate psychopathic constitution." An English report has information concerning 3,000 inebriates.[7] Of these nearly one half (49 per cent) were considered "defective," one eighth (12.4 per cent) "very defective," and a small number (2 per cent) "insane." The authors state that, in their opinion, "there exists a correlation of something like .70 to .80 between mental defect and alcoholism in this country. Of these two characteristics which is antecedent and which is consequent?" [8]

Perhaps this question can be answered as it stands, but we are inclined to consider both the mental deficiency and the alcoholism as elements in a situation which also involves such other factors as absence of supervision for the feeble-minded, ease of securing liquor, and the custom of social drinking. It appears that alcoholism is often the resort of a person almost able to "keep up," but just defective enough to keep falling behind. Immediately his indulgence makes him seem to be as good as the best of his associates, but later he is more handicapped than ever.

Leaving out of the account feeble-mindedness as such, there are several ways in which alcoholism and nervous instability may be

[5] William Healy *et al.*, *A Mental Health Primer* (1926), p. 17.

[6] V. V. Anderson, "The Alcoholic as Seen in Court," *Journal of Criminal Law*, 7 (1916), 89–95.

[7] Amy Barrington, Karl Pearson, and David Heron, *A Preliminary Study of Extreme Alcoholism in Adults* (1910), p. 8.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

related. First, the native restlessness may lead to drinking as a means of securing that vaguely defined something or other which may relieve this inner pressure. Second, it may be that, without deliberately seeking the alcohol, the neurotic may easily be induced by others to partake. Third, having partaken, he will probably display more promptly and more obviously disturbing effects of the liquor. The alcohol will be likely to emphasize the existing weakness, and leave the neurotic in a much worse condition than he was before. In these circumstances, the final condition of the patient may be ascribed *both* to his heredity and to his alcoholism.

A British psychiatrist, commenting on the presence of alcoholism and mental disorder in the same patient, holds that either may precede the other, but that "alcoholism is undoubtedly much more often the expression or accompaniment than the cause of a psychosis." She reports further that "alcoholism may be a symptom of almost any type of mental disorder." [9]

*Personal Deterioration of the Alcoholic.* Common observation is the principal basis for the belief that excessive indulgence in alcoholic beverages restricts one's social participation. We do not know of any systematic study of the social status and relationships of heavy drinkers. On the other hand, we have already seen that physical and mental deterioration curtail social participation. Here we shall cite some of the evidence that alcohol has damaging effects on the organism and the personality. From these data, we seem warranted in concluding that alcoholism does restrict participation in group life and cultural activities. Such a roundabout way of supplementing common observation may seem unwarranted, but it offers the only evidence available except the testimony of "experts" to which we shall refer later.

In a symposium published several years ago,[10] Dr. Haven Em-

[9] Kathleen Kitchin and D. Harcourt Kitchin (editors), *A Review of the Effects of Alcohol on Man* (1931), p. 132.

[10] Haven Emerson (editor), *Alcohol and Man, The Effects of Alcohol on Man in Health and Disease* (1933).

erson and six associates assembled a great deal of objective data, and stated the conclusions on which biologists (including medical men) and psychologists are pretty well agreed. The conclusions were summarized in simpler form by Dr. Emerson in a little book called *Alcohol, Its Effects on Man* (1934). The following generalizations are based on these sources. Alcohol used as a beverage is not a stimulant but a depressant, which affects chiefly the higher nerve centers, releasing the lower levels from control. It has a very limited food value. Otherwise, it has little demonstrable effect on the human body. But by depressing the higher centers, it removes inhibitions and thus modifies the drinker's behavior. Being less critical of himself, he tends to become more careless and to assume risks of accident and infection. He is less efficient in hand-eye co-ordinations such as those involved in typewriting, threading needles, marksmanship, and the like. He learns new material more slowly and remembers it less completely. He is slower in "free-association" tests and in "mental arithmetic." He loses some of his ability to distinguish the differences between sounds. His capacity to operate machines requiring frequent adjustments is reduced. On various tests of reasoning, his showing is poorer. The experiments on which these generalizations were based involved rather small doses of alcohol. The inference is that larger amounts would still further handicap the user both physically and mentally. As a matter of fact, medical examinations of persons suffering from chronic alcohol poisoning lend strong support to this inference.

There has been some debate as to the relative longevity of moderate drinkers and total abstainers. But there is complete agreement that chronic alcoholics are shorter-lived than persons of the other two types. There is also some question as to alcohol's effect on the body's resistance to disease, with general agreement that drinking does not increase resistance and sometimes decreases it. Indirectly, alcoholism seems to increase the chances of acquiring tuberculosis and syphilis, the former through impoverishment and poor nutri-

tion, the latter through the removal of inhibitions. Sir F. W. Mott has described the demoralization of the alcoholic in these words:

> Generally speaking the chronic alcoholic becomes indifferent to responsibilities, loses ambition, and his affection wanes. Thus he is content to see his home ruined, and his wife and children reduced to poverty and misery. He is either boastful and loquacious, or taciturn and ill-tempered. At one time he may be amiable and sociable, at another peevish and irritable, constantly grumbling and finding fault, if not actually rude and insulting. He may exhibit in his conversation wit and humour, but not infrequently the mental association is rather by rhyme and repetition of well-worn jokes, abusing epithets, and coarse, vulgar stories, but occasionally he exhibits keen repartee. He is warm-hearted and generous when, having regard to the poverty in his home, he should be careful with his money. Untruthfulness, loss of power of attention, and a tendency to invent fictitious stories are common symptoms of mental deterioration in the chronic alcoholic. But although he may be at any time a danger to society, he generally manages to escape the lunatic asylum.
>
> . . . All the evidence, however, indisputably tends to show that persons with an inborn neuropathic or psychopathic tendency, therefore having a narrow physiological margin of self-control, either due to an inborn deficiency of the highest evolutional level of the brain, or a functional instability of it, become anti-social by quantities of alcohol which would have no effect on the normal individual.[11]

*Economic Status and Opportunity.* Unfortunately, there is no present possibility of assembling objective data showing possible relations between income or wealth and amount or frequency or type of alcoholic indulgence. Neither do we have access to exact information concerning the number and size of establishments that refuse to employ drinking men or that discharge them for drinking on or off duty. However, we do know that many corporations and individual employers seek to prevent or restrict the use of alcoholic beverages by their workmen. The reasons have chiefly

[11] Ernest H. Starling *et al.*, *The Action of Alcohol on Man* (1923), Appendix by F. W. Mott, pp. 188, 211–12. By permission of Longmans, Green and Company.

to do with speed and accuracy of work, and accident hazards. Some salesmen are supposed to promote business through social drinking, but we know of no company that requires its salesmen to frequent bars and cocktail lounges! Railway trainmen, many truck drivers, policemen, firemen, and others whose work directly affects the public safety are forbidden to drink while on duty and sometimes forbidden to drink at all.

When there is no prohibition against alcoholic indulgence, employees may encounter no difficulty at all. But if they drink very much, they may lose time from work. If there are many such interruptions, they may be dismissed. In any case, they are spending for wine, beer, or liquor money that may be needed for other purposes. Thus, on the basis of common observation, it seems evident that even moderate use of alcoholic beverages may restrict economic opportunities, while excessive use quite certainly lowers one's economic status. The testimony of employers and social workers lends force to this conclusion.

*Family Life of Alcoholics.* Unfortunately, the effects of habitually excessive use of alcohol do not stop with the drinker himself. His children are often the most immediate sufferers. It appears that their troubles are rarely due to germinal impairment and not often to foetal injury, but very frequently to improper care during infancy and early childhood. At least, they do not inherit a direct alcoholic tendency, though they do frequently exhibit poor nutrition and poorly developed nervous systems. They are notoriously the victims of neglect and abuse. But the children suffer not merely as individuals; the whole fabric of family life is endangered by the excessive alcoholism of either parent.

. . . The S. family, for example, have dragged out a miserable life in which Saturdays and Sundays were a few degrees more to be dreaded than other days. The mother had broken down both physically and nervously; the oldest boy, weary of carrying almost the entire burden of the family support, was threatening to leave home; the two younger

children were falling behind in school and were seriously affected nervously by their father's threats and abuse. Last June Mr. S. succeeded in getting a quantity of crude alcohol and made himself a potent beverage of some sort which proved even more demoralizing than his previous drink. Not until the New Year was the supply exhausted. But since that time he has had no liquor and his wife reports him as working steadily and supporting the family, kind to the children and herself and interested in his home.[12]

Alcoholism may also interfere with the relations between husband and wife. The man is much more frequently alcoholic than is his wife. His economic inefficiency or waste may force the woman to go to work. His inebriation may cause the wife to repel his sexual advances. Alcohol may through lessening his inhibitions have the effect of stimulating sex desire, but at the same time it may interfere with his performance of the sex act. If the man attempts to practice sexual perversions, that may outrage and antagonize the wife. The growing tensions and weakened will power may lead to the husband's desertion or the wife's leaving. In any or several of these ways, marital conflict may develop and family life be disrupted.

Again we have no research findings which deal specifically with alcoholism and family life. We must rest our case on common observation and on the testimony of social workers.[13] However, pending receipt of evidence to the contrary, we are of the opinion that

[12] W. H. Pear, "Some Snapshot Pictures of the Effects of National Prohibition," *National Conference of Social Work* (1920), 237–8. By permission of the National Conference of Social Work.

[13] Harriet R. Mowrer, *Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord* (1935), chap. 7, describes and illustrates some of the ways in which "drink as an escape mechanism" contributes to marital conflict. Here data are derived from her work as domestic-discord consultant of the Jewish Social Service Bureau in Chicago. While we do not seriously question the accuracy of her descriptions or the soundness of her inferences, we are still without data concerning families of heavy drinkers in which there is no conflict, or convincing evidence that there are no such families.

alcoholism seriously interferes with family life. The influence of moderate drinking probably varies with the folkways and mores of the community and culture group to which the family belongs.

*Crime and Alcoholism.* In Chapter 1, we presented the story of two brothers who committed a brutal murder while "profoundly intoxicated." However, it would be a mistake to infer that drunkenness was the cause of the crime. As may be recalled, these men were feeble-minded, unschooled, unskilled, poverty-stricken, social outcasts. Any explanation of their crime must take account of the whole situation in which they lived and the course of their past lives. In other words, they were both alcoholic and criminal, but we have no basis for assuming that there is a simple causal relationship between these two facts.

In the symposium previously referred to,[14] Dr. Herman Adler reviewed the opinions of "experts" and such data as were available concerning the relation of alcohol to crime. These indicate that misdemeanors such as disturbing the peace, destruction of property, assault and battery are often committed by persons under the influence of alcohol. It is further indicated that these offenses are associated with occasional intoxication rather than with chronic alcoholism. Indirect evidence of a relationship between alcoholism and crimes against the person is found in the alleged fact that such offenses and the excessive use of alcohol occur during the same days and months. In general, the evidence bearing on this problem is very unsatisfactory. The statistical data, as well as the general statements of correctional officers and criminologists, leave much to be desired. Thus, Adler cites a study of 13,400 convicts in state prisons, stating that "intemperance figured as one of the causes" of crime in nearly half of the cases. It was rated a "first cause" in about one third. But apparently all that these statements can be interpreted to mean is that half of these prisoners had been drink-

[14] Haven Emerson (editor), *Alcohol and Man* (1933), chap. 12.

ing men, while one third were either heavy drinkers or their drinking occurred in connection with the offense of which they were convicted. Other investigations show that the parents of one fourth to one half of the delinquents studied were alcoholic. Various inferences might be drawn from such a statement. One is that children of parents who use alcoholic beverages to excess are likely to be neglected and socially ostracized; being deprived of material things and of companionship, they may fight back at the world and thus get into difficulty with the law.

Some statistical data pertaining to crime and alcoholism may be "loaded," because at various times and places the possession, making, sale, and drinking of alcoholic beverages are counted as offenses against the law. But apart from that, it does seem reasonable to believe that habitually excessive drinkers transgress the law more frequently than moderate drinkers and total abstainers. They doubtless commit some crimes, especially stealing, in order to secure liquor. They may drink in order to "screw up their courage" to commit a crime. Some places where liquor is sold are known to be the hangouts of underworld characters.

What then may we conclude as to the social participation of persons who indulge in beer, wine, and liquor? In groups where moderate drinking is customary, abstinence rather than indulgence must reduce contacts and group activities. In groups where moderate drinking is sanctioned, even though not general, it may actually promote good fellowship. In groups where prohibition is in the mores as well as in the law, any drinking must carry a stigma and bring a measure of isolation. In small groups of outcasts from the larger community, even heavy drinking may be one of the symbols of belonging. But on the whole, it appears that habitually excessive drinking restricts social participation both directly and indirectly, indirectly through physical and mental deterioration, directly by reason of the stigma attached to chronic alcoholism.

## DRUG ADDICTION

Persons addicted to the use of opium and its derivatives, to cocaine, and to marijuana are as truly outcasts as are the chronic alcoholics. But they are often described in a more sensational manner. The heavy drinker is quite generally despised in our culture, but the narcotic drug addict is sometimes viewed as a fascinatingly horrible denizen of the underworld. As a matter of fact, many users of morphine are quite as pathetic or disgusting as drunkards. The following story describes an addict whose career was anything but picturesque.

### A Patient Addicted to Morphine [15]

Patient was interviewed four times, first at the psychopathic hospital and two times outside at her residence, from April to May, 1934. The hospital record shows that patient is a white woman of twenty-seven, Catholic in religion, and a saleslady by profession. Notes on personal history say that patient had a violent temper during adolescence. She is artistic, musical, and always restless. She had been admitted once already for the treatment of drug addiction.

Patient began her story by telling that she started her drug habit by going to smoking parties. It was in Cleveland in 1932. She was with her partner in the dress business. The man took her to a room in the hotel and there she saw a woman cooking opium. She said she was quite shocked by the sight and did not smoke. But later when she was alone in a hotel, a married man placed the smoking outfit in her safekeeping, because his wife came to town, and she was asked to allow two girls to use the outfit. They came, and patient began to smoke opium for the first time in her life. She drank a lot of water to soothe her throat, moved around, and became sick. Several days later she was invited by a girl to her sweetheart's apartment, where two other girls and one man were smoking the pipe. She smoked and was sick again. But after she came back to Chicago she kept going to such parties and became

[15] Bingham Dai, *Opium Addiction in Chicago* (1937), chap. 3. By permission of the University of Chicago, Department of Sociology.

used to opium. She had her own smoking outfit and held parties once a week or more often. She claimed that she did not form a habit in this way and that her habit began to show only after she started using morphine.

She was rooming with a nurse, and she had insomnia. The nurse advised her to take morphine tablets, but warned her not to use them too often, lest she should develop a drug habit. But gradually she increased the dosage and the frequency. And one day she caught her roommate using the "hypo" and asked her to give her a "shot." She had a shot, and that shot, she said, marked the beginning of her morphine habit. It was three months after she had first used morphine tablets.

Last year she came to the hospital for her first cure. But on the third day after discharge from the hospital, she worked from early morning to late at night and was so tired and sick that she could not stand it any longer. So she took a cab to her second husband's apartment, and went back on the drug. Now she felt fine and did not believe that she would ever go back to the habit, although she would still like to go to smoking parties.

In the third interview, she mentioned her second husband, saying that he was a drug user, and that they discovered each other to be drug users on the third day after their marriage. But she flatly refused to speak any more about him, saying that to think of him recalled only very distasteful things.

Patient questioned the use of making investigation of drug addicts and the possibility of arriving at generalizations, for different users react to drugs differently, and children from the same family may behave differently. In her case, for example, she said, it was difficult to explain why she should have become a drug addict, while her sister, fifteen years older than she, should have turned out a refined and cultured lady, the wife of a successful businessman. Her sister wanted to send her to a state institution. Patient thought her sister was a busybody and meddled too much with her business, although she thought all was for her good.

Patient went on to mention her mother, who is living and stays by herself in a community away from the Loop. Patient used to telephone her mother every day, but hesitated to go home for she considered it sacrilegious to take drugs in her mother's house. Her mother, according to the patient, is the sweetest woman she has ever known, but she used

to be too strict. She would not allow her to have a drink or to smoke a cigarette or to play with other children on the street while she was at home. Whenever she violated any of the rules of the house, her mother would punish her by not speaking to her, sometimes for two days. That was terrible to her, and she used to appeal to her sister and brother for help, but they asked her to speak to her mother herself. Sometimes she would purposely fall on the stairs in order to obtain her mother's attention.

While her mother has been strict and old-fashioned and even did not allow her to go to movie shows, her father was a "pal" and often sneaked her out to a show. He died when she was seventeen. She took it quite hard, she said. Three months after her father's death, she went to a business college in town and completed the course in a year and a half, and secured a job in a firm in spite of her mother's wish to keep her at home.

It was while working in the firm mentioned above that she met her first husband. He was nineteen years older and was sentimental about her, but she did not love him. She consented to marry him because she wanted very badly to get away from home. She used to be proud of herself and indifferent to her husband, and thought it was smart to humiliate her husband before his friends. One time they were due at a dinner party and she was twenty minutes late. Before she entered the dining hall in a hotel, she overheard one of his friends criticizing her, and so from that time on she changed her attitude, and gradually came to like her husband. But all the same, she could not live with him, as he could not satisfy her sexually. After three years, they were separated and finally divorced. She stressed the fact that she was a virgin when she was first married.

One week after her discharge from the hospital, she called the interviewer, and the interview was held at her residence at 32nd and Ellis, a Negro community. Without much hesitation, she confessed that yesterday she went to a doctor and received a shot of morphine, because she really could not stand it. All day yesterday, she said, she tore off all her fingernails. She appeared exhausted, dirty, and restless, and tried by means of endearing words and manners to get the interviewer's sympathy and money.

In the course of conversation, it was spontaneously revealed that she was married to her second husband in the previous year. He is a con-

fidence man, and a cripple, and is thirteen years her senior. He is highly intelligent but has no principles. He never keeps his word and spares no tricks in his dealings with people. She had known him for two years before marriage and never had sexual intercourse with him during the period of courtship. She said he respected her. But in the course of a week after marriage, he became bold and showed his perversions. Instead of normal coitus, he preferred cunnilingus exclusively. She was so shocked the first time that she cried for three days and dared not speak to other people about it. She thought then that it was terrible, and that it sapped her energy and vitality. She much prefers normal coitus and desires to have a baby. But her husband is sterile. He is a drug user as mentioned above. For these and other reasons, she hesitated to go back to him, although he still cares for her, according to her story. The interviewer got the impression that the patient was afraid of her present husband.

Incidents relating to her attitude toward women are grouped in the following. She was educated in a Catholic school. She got along well, but hated to take part in theatrical performances on religious holidays, for she wanted to play in her own way. But the Sister in charge often picked her out and asked her to take part, and she would coax the patient whenever the latter showed reluctance in learning her part, saying, "Now—you don't want to act in such a manner," etc. Then she would feel all right and take her part willingly. She has very few women friends and she never trusts them. They are not like men friends, who could be loyal and faithful to each other. Women are generally "catty" and cut each other's throat. She has always liked men and feels more at home with them.

Patient had told the interviewer that the colored landlady in whose house she was staying is a niece of a colored woman who used to work in her mother's home and used to nurse her, etc. She also gave the interviewer the impression that she was there just for a retreat and then would go home. She continuously asked for money from the interviewer in various ways, and there was no question but that she solicited men for money. But the next time the interviewer called, patient had left the place, and he was told by the landlady that patient had left her without paying the room rent she owed; and furthermore she stole the landlady's underwear and her new sweater. The landlady said that when patient first came to her house, a colored chauffeur accompanied her

and said that she was his personal friend. The colored man stayed with her, and later more colored men came and drank a lot of moonshine. The landlady was furious, because she had treated the patient well. She denied the story patient told about her being the niece of a colored woman who used to work in her home.

*Nature and Incidence of Drug Addiction.* When the term drug addiction is employed, it ordinarily refers to use of products of the opium poppy (especially morphine and heroin), of coca leaves (cocaine), and of the commercial hemp plant (marijuana and hashish). Some of these drugs have well-known legitimate uses in the practice of medicine. These uses do not concern us here. Our present interest is in persons who have come to depend on one or more narcotic drugs, which they usually secure through illicit channels, and which they find it difficult, if not impossible, to give up.

The steps which lead toward addiction commonly involve the influence of other addicts (companions at "pleasure parties," prostitutes, homosexuals, drug peddlers), self-medication to relieve physical pain or discomfort (patent medicines), use by physician or nurse in medical treatment. Of course, narcotics are prescribed for many patients who never become addicts. Apparently if the drug is administered for only a short time, and if the patient does not know what it is or its relation to his physical comfort, he is very unlikely to become enslaved to it. But if its use is continued over an extended period, if he experiences withdrawal symptoms (discomfort and irritability, even nausea), and if he realizes that the drug will relieve these, he is likely to make great efforts to obtain it. As time passes, the body develops a tolerance for the drug so that larger doses must be taken to relieve or prevent the withdrawal symptoms. (These symptoms are associated with opiates, not with cocaine.) The attitudes ascribed to beginners are curiosity, bravado, and desire to escape from some painful experience, physical or mental. Some addicts have undoubtedly been emotionally

unstable before beginning to use a narcotic. Some might even be described as psychopathic personalities. But whatever they may have been beforehand, they all come to be sick both in body and in mind. Some people regard them as weak-willed, depraved, vicious, incurable, and hopeless. These popular attitudes, being known to most addicts, create or exaggerate a feeling of inferiority and serve to exclude them from many social groups and activities.

The users of narcotic drugs include a wide variety of folk—the intellectually superior and the subnormal, the idle rich and the outcast of the underworld. One may be honest and competent, while another is dishonest and incompetent. A study of 2,500 opium addicts in Chicago showed the modal age to be 30 to 34, with less than 8 per cent under 25. Their addiction began in most cases between the ages of 20 and 29. One third had used drugs for less than 5 years, one third from 5 to 14 years, and one third 15 years or more. The great majority were native white of native parents; but Negroes, who constituted less than 7 per cent of the population, supplied over 17 per cent of the opium addicts. The addicts were drawn from various religious groups in about the same proportions that these formed of the general population. Their schooling was below the average for the city; 69.5 per cent, as against 61.1 per cent, had not gone beyond the eighth grade. As to occupation, a disproportionate number was found in domestic and personal service—30.1 per cent, as against 12.0 per cent in the general population. Three fifths of the known female addicts were classified as domestics. Only one fourth of the male addicts were in this occupational group, but they constituted three times the percentage of all male Chicagoans so classified. As to marital status, the addicts showed excessively large percentages of single males and of divorced females. They displayed a considerable range of intelligence quotients and degrees of emotional stability, but taken as a group they were considered markedly inadequate either in

their emotional adjustments to life situations or in value judgments or in both.[16]

The number of opium addicts in the United States has been variously estimated at figures ranging all the way from 110,000 to 1,000,000.[17] China was reported to have 2,250,000 in 1927.[18] We have no reliable means of securing an accurate count for any country. Hence, we cannot tell whether the numbers have been increasing or decreasing. The users of other narcotics seem to be still more elusive, for we have found not even an estimate of their numbers. It is believed, however, that cocaine addiction in the United States is largely restricted to the underworld.

*Personal Effects of Drug Addiction.* While a discussion of bodily changes that take place in drug addicts naturally lies outside the scope of this book, it is proper to observe that deterioration tends to occur. The higher nerve centers are affected most. The addict is rendered insensitive not only to physical pain but also to conflict, failure, and disappointment. "Morphine and heroin, when taken in large doses, sap the physical and mental energy; lethargy is produced." [19] "Cocaine increases sex power, decreases appetite, brings on rapid emaciation, causes a nervous feeling that passes over into anxiety, and in addicts who take excessive amounts over long periods, the anxiety gradually develops into persecutory delusions and the physical over-activity may culminate in convulsions." [20]

A few people have used narcotic drugs in moderation over an extended period of years without apparent interference with their professional, domestic, and other social activities. These are exceptional persons who appreciate the nature of these drugs and their own physical condition. But it seems quite certain that even they

[16] Dai, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

[17] *Social Work Year Book, 1929*, p. 146.

[18] *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 5: 248.

[19] Lawrence Kolb, "Pleasure and Deterioration from Narcotic Addiction," *Mental Hygiene*, 9 (1925), 716. By permission of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 708.

would have lived more successfully and more happily without the drugs than with them. Indeed, there is a very serious menace to the respectable addict's peace of mind in that he is engaged in a practice which, if known, would cause him to lose the confidence and respect of other people. He is therefore in constant fear lest his condition be discovered.

For the great majority of addicts, there are more obvious and more serious consequences. With the realization of their dependence on the drug, the failure of so-called "cures," worry, the cynical attitude of other people, even of practicing physicians, and social ostracism, the victims lose confidence in themselves, become hopeless and discouraged. As the demoralization advances, they may display personal disorderliness, disregard of time, neglect of business, or decline of family affection. What all this means is that narcotic drug addiction affects different persons in different ways, but that deterioration is a very common result.

*Social Relations of Drug Addicts.* The direct personal effects of habitual use of narcotic drugs are such as to hamper many, if not most, addicts in their social relations. As they slip into slovenliness, irresponsibility, and untrustworthiness, they must irritate and repel other persons with whom they have been associated. Of course, if personal demoralization does not set in and if the fact of addiction is not known to others, the drug user may suffer no loss of social contacts. But since there appears usually to be some deterioration and since use of narcotics is hard to conceal, we may assume that popular disapproval is visited on a majority of addicts. As a matter of fact, the general notion that those who take morphine, cocaine, or some other drug are constitutional psychopaths, moral weaklings, or loathsome criminals may bring upon some addicts a condemnation greater than their physical and mental condition warrants.

The character of the procedures and facilities for treatment often adds to the stigma. In many cities, drug addicts are arrested, finger-

printed, and sentenced to jail or committed to hospitals for the insane. When one comes out of a prison or hospital, he is a marked man. His fellow addicts may be the only ones who will take him in. The rejection by nonaddicts and the temptations associated with old haunts and old cronies may be sufficient to renew the "habit." Such backsliding naturally brings more opprobrium upon the addict and adds to the widespread belief that "dope fiends" are hopeless.

Concerning family life of drug addicts, we have very limited information. Dai remarked of those studied in Chicago that "most of these addicts did not seem to have much of what may be called familial ties." [21] Table 61 shows that a much smaller percentage of opium users than of the general population was married. Too much

Table 61

MARITAL STATUS OF OPIUM ADDICTS IN CHICAGO COMPARED WITH THE GENERAL POPULATION 15 YEARS OLD AND OVER

Percentages

| | MALE | | FEMALE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Opium Addicts* [a] | *General Population* [b] | *Opium Addicts* [a] | *General Population* [b] |
| Single | 53.2 | 36.5 | 22.1 | 27.9 |
| Married | 38.0 | 58.0 | 52.7 | 59.2 |
| Widowed | 4.2 | 4.0 | 13.9 | 11.0 |
| Separated | 1.8 | . . . | 4.5 | . . . |
| Divorced | 2.7 | 1.3 | 6.6 | 1.7 |
| Common law | .1 | . . . | .2 | . . . |
| Total | 100.0 | 99.8 | 100.0 | 99.8 |

[a] Bingham Dai, *Opium Addicts in Chicago* (1937), p. 55. By permission of the University of Chicago, Department of Sociology.
[b] Fifteenth Census, *Population,* vol. 3, part 1, p. 70.

[21] Dai, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

confidence should not be placed in these figures, for it is possible that many men who reported themselves to be single really were married. On the other hand, some of those who said they were married were doubtless detached from their families. It is likely that two thirds of the males and one half of the females were not living in families. It is furthermore reasonable to suppose that marital ties were often strained, even when not broken, and that family tensions were frequent. However, since we lack precise information, we offer this only as an inference.

As to employment and economic status, we have even fewer data. Because of the lethargy commonly induced, many addicts are idlers and dependents. Some who have difficulty in securing drugs may be rendered uncomfortable, restless, or weak, and thus unable to engage in regular work. Some may stay away from work in order to look for drugs. The insistent urge for the narcotic may lead to the exhaustion of such financial resources as they possess or to begging or stealing. All these experiences have been noted, but their relative frequency is unknown.

To summarize the whole matter, drug addiction often develops in persons who might make poor social adjustments in any case. The use of narcotics may help them somewhat and temporarily. But, in the long run, they tend to be excluded more and more from social groups and from cultural activities, through a combination of physical weakness, emotional instability, personal demoralization, and public condemnation. The effects of drug addiction show considerable individual variation, but, in general, social participation of the addict is restricted.

## Suggested Readings

*Alcoholism*

Durfee, Charles H., "Understanding the Drinker," *Mental Hygiene*, 20 (1936), 11–29. A discussion of the behavior of alcoholics, causal factors, and treatment.

Emerson, Haven (editor), *Alcohol and Man; the Effects of Alcohol on Man in Health and Disease.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932. A symposium by specialists dealing largely with physiological effects of alcohol. One section reviews psychological experiments on users of alcohol.

Emerson, Haven, *Alcohol, Its Effects on Man.* New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1934. A small book summarizing conclusions of the foregoing symposium.

Kitchin, Kathleen, and Kitchin, D. Harcourt (editors), *A Review of the Effects of Alcohol on Man.* London: V. Gollancz, Ltd., 1931. Report of a British medical committee.

Mowrer, Harriet R., *Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord.* New York: American Book Company, 1935. Chapter 7, "Drink as an Escape Mechanism," deals with the significance of alcoholism for marital relations.

*Drug Addiction*

Dai, Bingham, *Opium Addiction in Chicago.* Shanghai: The Commercial Press Limited, 1937. A doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago. The only monograph we have found written from a sociological point of view.

Kolb, Lawrence, "Pleasure and Deterioration from Narcotic Addiction," *Mental Hygiene,* 9 (1925), 699–724. A medical and psychiatric interpretation with sociological implications.

Kolb, Lawrence, "Drug Addiction in its Relation to Crime," *Mental Hygiene,* 9 (1925), 74–89. An analysis based on the study of 225 addicts who were also delinquents.

Lindesmith, A. R., "A Sociological Theory of Drug Addiction," *American Journal of Sociology,* 43 (1938), 593–613. Supports the thesis that "addiction is generated in the process of using the drug consciously to alleviate withdrawal distress." This is severely criticized by Dr. David Slight, a psychiatrist.

Terry, C. E., "Drug Addiction," *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* 5 (1931), 242–51. The best brief, general discussion readily available to students and teachers.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Chart the history in the local community, the state, and the nation of efforts to control the use of alcoholic beverages—e. g., local option,

high license fees, closing hours, prohibition, repeal, and other measures. Assemble data as to arrests for drunkenness, for disturbing the peace, and for assault and battery; data as to commitment for alcoholic psychoses; data as to deaths from alcoholism and cirrhosis of the liver. Does there appear to be any relation between these series?

2. In groups to which the students belong, what distinctions, if any, are made between total abstainers, moderate drinkers, heavy drinkers? Is occasional intoxication, as at "home-coming," approved, tolerated, or condemned?

3. Devise scales and tests similar to those which have been previously suggested to obtain attitudes of the class and college classmates, possibly of others in the community, toward alcoholics and drug addicts. How far does the attitude of disapproval go, to the person affected, to his family?

4. Write the life history of a confirmed alcoholic or morphine addict. Note particularly the changes in social and economic status, family relations, and various group and cultural activities.

5. Inquire of commercial and industrial establishments what is their policy concerning the employment or discharge of persons known to indulge occasionally or regularly in alcoholic beverages. Are there any businesses or vocations in which drinking appears to be an advantage?

6. If the local police, a hospital, or other agency has had extensive experience with drug addicts, arrange an interview to discuss causes, consequences, and controls.

7. Discuss with a social case worker the effects on family life of situations in which alcoholism is a factor. Note effects on marital and parent-child relations. Possibly a limited study of a small number of situations could be made, the student noting especially source of income, social status, activities and interests of children, reactions of family toward the problem. This material should be gathered with the aid of a schedule which might be made in class with approval of the instructor and the social agency.

8. Interview or discuss with a physician familiar with some treatments for confirmed alcoholics the nature of treatments and their effects on social participation of the patient.

# *Chapter 20*

# PERSONAL STIGMA AND BROKEN HOME: DIVORCEES

IN the two chapters just preceding this, we have dealt with four kinds of people who are stigmatized in our culture and whose stigma is believed to hamper their social participation materially. But, in addition to the social distance implicit in social attitudes toward unmarried mothers, ex-convicts, alcoholics, and drug addicts, these persons are handicapped in other ways, as by physical inability to work and by financial difficulties. Often they appear to have had a very narrow range of social relations even before entering upon the specifically tabooed behavior which was the immediate occasion of ostracism. Some of them were undoubtedly incompetent to take an active part in social life. Hence, it is almost impossible to measure the extent to which the social stigma has really affected their social participation. But there is nonstatistical evidence that the scorn and condemnation of their fellows do restrict the range of their contacts and group activities. We turn now to another type of experience which involves social stigma along with other factors. The divorced person has experienced a break in his marital relations; he may be separated from children; he is viewed askance by members of certain churches; he may be condemned by some of his old associates. If his marital discord and subsequent disruption are traceable in any way to personality defects, he has doubtless been shunned by others as an irritable, unstable, annoying individual. In such case, his postdivorce isolation is due both to his low status as a divorced person and to his personal traits which existed

long before his marriage was broken. The following story displays some of the social difficulties of the divorcee.

### A Divorcee Ten Years After [1]

Ten years ago I was thirty years old. My child, a boy, was eight. My husband was forty.

At twenty I had married on the basis of what is ambiguously called love. When the first "careless rapture" of passion, which a great neurologist has termed "a self-curing disease," had inevitably yielded to the attempt at mutual tolerance and understanding which marriage in its maturity demands, there was much that survived. We both thought the same things were amusing, a compatibility which forms as firm a foundation for the continuation of marriage as any I can now imagine. We both were devoted to our child, although we each frequently considered the other's attitude toward the boy a mistaken one. While each of us was reluctant to contemplate the possibility of extra-marital relationships for the other one, we were both tacitly agreed to exact from the other merely the dignity of that consideration which precludes cheapness and scandal. Jim was reasonably successful in his profession and possessed the characteristics of that somewhat mythical paragon, a gentleman, characteristics which do much to alleviate the exigencies of prolonged intimacy. Economically we were comfortable. Consequently the *bête noire* of financial worry did not disturb our mutual peace of mind.

To me now, this situation would present a working basis for matrimony. To me then, the fact that Jim drank too much and consequently visited upon me, the child, and the servants, the inevitable morning-after-the-night-before irritability blinded me to all else. The not infrequent on-the-wagon periods approximated happiness.

The emotional reactions of a wife to the drinking situation are so familiar that I need not recapture my own to know that I often behaved badly; that I repeatedly confused a suspicious preparedness for the too much with its actuality; that I was frequently unjust; that I probably descended to nagging and to an irritability of my own.

Undeniably, however, at the time of my decision for divorce I cared for my husband. I defy even the most callous wife to be so overcome by

[1] From an anonymous account, *Harper's Magazine*, 165 (1932), 313–21. By permission of the editors.

the antipathy which is inescapably an occasional part of any close relationship that she fails to experience at least a maternal concern and affection for her recalcitrant husband. Admittedly, I was not "in love" with Jim at the time of my divorce. This phrase implies, in to-day's jargon, a more or less obsessional physical attraction, a condition which even in my most benighted days I did not consider a fundamental of marriage.

Jim was not an admirable person—but neither was I. I knew his weaknesses. He knew mine. This fact now seems less a cause for divorce than for continued marriage which, even more than the weaving of an oriental rug, demands acceptance of the verity that only Allah is perfect.

I think I used to say, "I must have freedom to bring up my child as I see fit and to live my own life"—whatever that may mean. . . .

"Freedom to bring up my child?" Whose child is this son of mine? I know now that he is his father's—and mine. Ten years ago I thought with a satisfactory, if specious, logic that he was mine. The fact that Jim was an alcoholic deprived him, I thought, of the right to paternal influence. I still insist to myself that this may be so.

But if his father drank fifty times as extremely as he does, I now believe that would be insufficient reason to deprive the child of his father. At the end of a decade's conscientious endeavor to give my child a rounded and normal existence, I know that it is for one parent an impossible task. Almost any father is better than none. He need not be admirable. His own child will consider him so for a few brief years, and in the salutary interchange of approval and the instinctive effort of its object to live up to it we have all witnessed the miracle of mutual benefit. . . .

What most amazes me now is the confidence I felt that I could be both father and mother to a child born of myself and one other element, an element so alien that I divorced it from me. I now believe that divorce between two people who have children is not only undesirable but impossible. The child is there: Exhibit A, to prove that the divorced parent *is*. In the face of this fact the arrogance of a woman or a man in determining that the other parent is superfluous is an astonishing thing.

How could I have been so sure that, although temperate in drinking, I had no characteristics difficult to deal with?

In financial matters I am appallingly uneducated. I have no idea of the value of a dollar or of the value of a hundred dollars. . . . The in-

come on which my son and I live is not unlimited. If it were, my stupidity in money matters would still be an unfortunate circumstance for a growing boy, a circumstance which would have found a counter balance in his father's financial practicability.

Had our marriage continued, the boy would have been given a protection against my own inadequacies that would have by far outmeasured the harm—if it had been harm—of meeting directly the shortcomings, even the pathological ones, of his own father.

There is this to be said for my determination not to allow my child to be brought up in what I considered at that time, and still consider, an unfortunate environment. Since a child accepts as normal all that appears in his immediate horizon, it must be of as acceptable a nature as possible. Excessive drinking, with all that goes with it of instability, lack of discrimination, and recurring petty injustices, does not make for that sense of security to which I believe a child is entitled. On the other hand, since security is at best an illusion, perhaps the sooner a child is acclimatized to the shifting of the external pattern the better.

Freed from the emotional content of Jim's situation and mine—a content without which there could have been no situation—even the circumstance of alcoholism seems one that would not have hurt my child.

On a recent Christmas morning when he went to spend an appointed hour or two with his father, he found him much the worse for wear, the celebration of Christmas Eve having involved too much of the cup that cheers. The scene, as described to me later by the boy, was not a pretty one. His observation at the end of its recounting was, "I did what I could but I'm afraid he's going to have an uncomfortable afternoon. I'll go back after lunch, if you don't mind, and see if he needs me. Gee, what a silly way to spend Christmas, being sick from last night." The incident had probably benefited the boy. Certainly it had not harmed him.

If a child is going to be defeated by environment, he is going to be defeated. If not, my conviction is that he can and, with the magnificent courage of childhood, will metamorphose into strength all that he meets. Justly or not, this is the way of life: the survival of the fittest in very fact.

Recently I stopped at the country club to take the boy home. He had been spending with his father the "one day a month" that is legally

permitted. They were standing together by the tennis court, the boy lighting his father's pipe, and then his own cigarette. There was a camaraderie, momentary, but undeniable. Their startling physical similarity could not be ignored. Suddenly I felt like a kidnapper. I was the intruder, even from the mere fact of being a woman. It did not take civilization to bring that stern demarcation about. Savages make it. When I cut my son off from his father I transgressed one of the most fundamental clanships that exists: man and man.

I have not married again. This has been a great boost to my morale. I have regarded this accidental fact as a comforting proof that I left my husband for no selfish reason, not for my own emotional indulgence, not for any consideration in my life at all. Only "for the good of the boy" I repeatedly insisted to myself, insisted with such vigor that had I applied then, as in all likelihood I should now, the quotation, "methinks the lady doth protest too much," I should have been warned of the inadequacy of my platform. As a matter of fact, this defense of virtue is one I have very much needed from the day I started divorce proceedings to the present time. The trouble is that it no longer screens from me the knowledge that what I considered ten years ago to be a courageous and commendable gesture was merely a stupid one.

If I, admittedly, almost insistently, a selfish woman, seem to have laid too much emphasis on the effect of divorce on my child, perhaps it is that without undue maternal devotion my child *is* more than myself.

As to the effect upon my ex-husband of the divorce which I insisted on getting much against his will, he is to me now my son's father far more actually than he was ever my husband. In view of this fact, it would be impossible for me to be indifferent to his life subsequent to our divorce or to be oblivious to the unhappiness which my decision has inflicted upon him. Moreover, roots of common experience, of shared days and nights, of mutual parenthood are not shallowly planted. . . .

The scene is for the moment a railroad station in the early morning. I am waiting for the train that is to bring "our" son home from college or, a few years earlier, that same smaller son from school. There is an aloneness about that wait which even the child himself and his excited arrival cannot dispel. I need, and desperately, someone to share my affection for the boy, my pride in the inches he has gained in height, my delight in the bewildering maturity revealed by his expanding vocabulary. Strangely enough (or is it strange?), I am aware that the child's

homecoming, in spite of his satisfying devotion to me and his unfeigned joy in being with me again, is not a complete thing. I know that the amputation, where pain still describes itself in space, is a reality shared by the child himself. The artificial formality of telephoning "father to let him know you are safely home" is like a chill wind on a warm June day. There is a poignant consciousness of the exiled parent. . . .

In looking back over my ten years of marriage and the ten years following the divorce, I discover that my life has continued with its balance of happiness and unhappiness essentially unaltered. Much which I believed was the fault of my husband has proved to be the result of my own inadaptation or misadaptation to the rigors of life. It is amazingly easy to put the blame on marriage for one's personal moods or for one's graver unhappinesses, and a husband is the most inclusively satisfactory rationalization that can be found for almost anything that is wrong with life.

*The Status of Divorce in Our Culture.* The foregoing account emphasizes some of the personal problems that are faced by persons whose home has been broken by divorce. It barely hints at the attitudes of other people, which in many instances are the source of much unhappiness to divorcees and their children. If these attitudes were uniformly those of condemnation, it would be hard enough. But because they present a curious mixture of encouragement and scorn, of approval and disparagement, the divorced person finds himself in a very uncertain position. It would be very much easier, as Waller says, if American society did not "encourage a breach and then exact a penalty for it." [2] This confusion is mirrored in the wide variation in American divorce laws.[3] Taking the country as a whole, there are thirty-nine different grounds on which a divorce may be granted. South Carolina makes no provision for divorce, while Kentucky offers a choice of fifteen "causes" which may be utilized in divorce suits. New York and the District of Columbia permit divorce only in case of adultery, while New Hampshire

[2] Willard Waller, *The Old Love and the New* (1930), p. 311.

[3] Chester G. Vernier, *American Family Laws* (1932), vol. 2, p. 3 ff.

recognizes cruelty, desertion, impotence, imprisonment, intoxication, and nonsupport in addition to adultery and five minor grounds. In fifteen states insanity is a basis for the legal disruption of a marriage. Confusion is further increased by the fact that divorces procured in one state are not always recognized in others. The marriage of a divorcee may be valid in one state, but illegal and bigamous in another. As might be expected, resort to the divorce court varies greatly from region to region and from state to state. In 1931, there were per 1,000 of the married population 8.53 divorces in the Mountain states, but only 1.35 in the Middle Atlantic states. In New York, the ratio was 0.91; in Nevada, it was 134.87.[4]

But no less significant than the laws are the stated positions of organized groups, especially of churches. Because the stand of the Roman Catholic Church has been so strongly taken in opposition to divorce, we quote from an encyclical of Pope Pius XI.[5]

> Opposed to all these reckless opinions, Venerable Brethren, stands the unalterable law of God, fully confirmed by Christ, a law that can never be deprived of its force by the decrees of men, the ideas of a people, or the will of any legislator: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." And if any man, acting contrary to this law, shall have put asunder, his action is null and void, and the consequence remains, as Christ Himself has explicitly confirmed: "Everyone that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery." Moreover, these words refer to every kind of marriage, even that which is natural and legitimate only; for as has already been observed, that indissolubility by which the loosening of the bond is once and for all removed from the whim of the parties and from every secular power, is a property of every true marriage.
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> Let that solemn pronouncement of the Council of Trent be recalled to mind in which, under the stigma of anathema, it condemned these errors: "If anyone should say that on account of heresy or the hard-

[4] *Marriage and Divorce, 1931* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1932]), p. 15.

[5] *Casti Connubii*, pp. 103–04, 105–06, quoted by Eva J. Ross, *A Survey of Sociology* (1932), pp. 399–400, 401–02. By permission of Eva J. Ross.

ships of cohabitation or a deliberate abuse of one party by the other the marriage tie may be loosened, let him be anathema"; and again: "If anyone should say that the Church errs in having taught or in teaching that, according to the teaching of the Gospel and the Apostles, the bond of marriage cannot be loosed because of the sin of adultery of either party; or that neither party, even though he be innocent, having given no cause of the sin of adultery, can contract another marriage during the lifetime of the other; and that he commits adultery who marries another after putting away his adulterous wife, and likewise that she commits adultery who puts away her husband and marries another: let him be anathema."

If therefore the Church has not erred and does not err in teaching this, and consequently it is certain that the bond of marriage cannot be loosed even on account of the sin of adultery, it is evident that all the other weaker excuses that can be, and are usually brought forward, are of no value whatsoever. And the objections brought against the firmness of the marriage bond are easily answered. For, in certain circumstances, imperfect separation of the parties is allowed, the bond not being severed.

To revert again to the expressions of Our Predecessor, it is hardly necessary to point out what an amount of good is involved in the absolute indissolubility of wedlock and what a train of evils follows upon divorce. Whenever the marriage bond remains intact, then we find marriages contracted with a sense of safety and security, while, when separations are considered and the dangers of divorce are present, the marriage contract itself becomes insecure, or at least gives ground for anxieties and surprises. On the one hand we see a wonderful strengthening of good will and cooperation in the daily life of husband and wife, while, on the other, both of these are miserably weakened by the presence of a facility for divorce. Here we have at a very opportune moment a source of help by which both parties are enabled to preserve their purity and loyalty; there we find harmful inducements to unfaithfulness. On this side we find the birth of children and their tuition and upbringing effectively promoted, many avenues of discord closed among families and relations, and the beginnings of rivalry and jealousy easily suppressed; on that, very great obstacles to the birth of children and their education, and many occasions of quarrels, and seeds of jealousy are sown everywhere. Finally, but especially, the dignity and position of women in civil and domestic society is reinstated by the former; while

by the latter it is shamefully lowered and the danger is incurred "of their being considered outcasts, slaves of the lust of men."

To conclude with the very important words of Leo XIII, since the destruction of family life "and the loss of national wealth is brought about more by the corruption of morals than by anything else, it is easily seen that divorce, which is born of the perverted morals of a people, and leads, as experiment shows, to vicious habits in public and private life, is particularly opposed to the well-being of the family and of the State. The serious nature of these evils will be the more clearly recognized, when we remember that, once divorce has been allowed, there will be no sufficient means of keeping it in check within any definite bounds. Great is the force of example, greater still that of lust; and with such incitements it cannot but happen that divorce and its consequent setting loose of the passions should spread daily and attack the souls of many like a contagious disease or a river bursting its banks and flooding the land."

This is perhaps the sternest condemnation of divorce that has appeared in our culture. Moreover, it represents the official position of a very large and influential religious group. Other churches show a wide range of attitudes. Some, like the Lutherans, are in substantial agreement with the Catholics, while most of the Protestants leave a great deal of discretion to the clergy. One minister has said: "Those whom God has joined together are not lightly to be put asunder; but there are those whom God has not joined together." [6] Outside the ecclesiastical ranks similarly divergent positions are taken. While some decry "the evils of divorce," others grant that a marriage may be broken "at the point where its continuation is a genuine, irremediable and permanent violation of the personalities of its members." [7] Reuter goes so far as to hold that "the legal dissolution of the marriage contract is not in itself a matter of great interest nor of much importance. It is simply the formal social and

[6] Joseph Fort Newton, "What God Hath Not Joined," *Atlantic Monthly*, 131 (1923), 724.

[7] Earle E. Eubank, "When Marriage Fails," *World Tomorrow*, 10 (1927), 276.

legal recognition of a prior fact—that a family has ceased to exist." [8] It is plain that many divorced persons, perhaps a great majority, find themselves either sternly condemned or bewildered; their social status is either that of outcasts or very uncertain. To be sure, some people accept them, but a great many reject them, while still others leave the victims in doubt as to how they stand. Whether public sentiment and opinion is changing in any particular direction is hard to tell. Hart found about the same number of magazine articles per thousand dealing with divorce at the beginning as at the end of the period, 1905–1931. In *The New York Times Index*, he found the number of divorce items decreasing till the end of the World War, after which they increased rapidly. Analyzing the contents of magazine articles, he found alternating waves of approval and disapproval. Before the War, he found the two divided almost evenly. During the War, discussion of divorce greatly diminished; approval diminished even more. But in the 1920's, there was a slight predominance of approval, followed by a decline about 1930.[9]

*The Incidence of Divorce.* The actual number of divorces granted has been increasing pretty steadily for half a century. In only seven of the years from 1887 to 1935 was the number of divorces less than in the preceding year. Six of these were depression years and the other was in wartime. This general trend is displayed in Table 62 and more completely in the sources there cited. Not only has there been a great increase in the absolute number of divorces; the ratios of divorces to marriages and to the total population have also risen. Hence we are warranted in the statement that no matter what churchmen and publicists may say, the American people are resorting to the divorce court with increasing frequency. This suggests

[8] E. B. Reuter and Jessie R. Runner, *The Family* (1931), p. 513. By permission of McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

[9] Hornell Hart, "Changing Social Attitudes and Interests," *Recent Social Trends* (1933), pp. 414–17.

Table 62

## NUMBER OF DIVORCES IN THE UNITED STATES, 1887–1935, RATIO TO MARRIAGES PERFORMED AND TO TOTAL POPULATION [a]

| | | DIVORCES | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Year* | *Number* | *Per 100 Marriages* | *Per 1,000 Population* |
| 1887 | 27,919 | 5.5 | 0.47 |
| 1897 | 44,699 | 7.0 | 0.62 |
| 1906 | 72,062 | 8.2 | 0.86 |
| 1916 | 114,000 | 10.6 | 1.13 |
| 1926 | 180,853 | 15.0 | 1.55 |
| 1927 | 192,037 | 16.0 | 1.62 |
| 1928 | 195,939 | 16.6 | 1.63 |
| 1929 | 201,168 | 16.3 | 1.66 |
| 1930 | 191,591 | 17.0 | 1.56 |
| 1931 | 183,664 | 17.3 | 1.48 |
| 1932 | 160,338 | 16.3 | 1.28 |
| 1933 | 165,000 | 15.0 | 1.31 |
| 1934 | 204,000 | 15.6 | 1.61 |
| 1935 | 218,000 | 16.4 | 1.71 |

[a] Figures from 1887–1932 are from *Marriage and Divorce, 1931* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 12, and a release for 1932. Figures for 1933–1935 are estimates by Samuel A. Stouffer and Lyle M. Spencer, "Marriage and Divorce in Recent Years," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 188 (1936), 58.

the inference that the stigma attached to divorce is declining. However, that is a matter concerning which we cannot be very sure. Table 63 makes it plain that the situation is by no means the same in different parts of the country. Omitting Nevada, the four states displaying the highest ratios of divorces to the married population had, in 1931, rates four times as great as those of the five states at

Table 63

DIVORCES PER 1,000 OF THE MARRIED POPULATION IN TEN SELECTED STATES, 1931 [a]

| *State* | *Ratio* |
|---|---|
| Nevada | 134.87 |
| Wyoming | 6.73 |
| Oklahoma | 6.61 |
| Texas | 6.31 |
| Arizona | 6.22 |
| New Jersey | 1.74 |
| Delaware | 1.71 |
| North Carolina | 1.27 |
| District of Columbia | 0.98 |
| New York | 0.91 |

[a] *Marriage and Divorce, 1931* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 15.

the other extreme. From the census data, we learn that, in general, divorce rates increase as we cross the country from east to west. Just why this is true, we cannot be sure. Perhaps the relative dates of white settlement, sex ratios, religious affiliations, and degrees of urbanization are significant factors.

In Table 64, we note that the commonest grounds on which divorces have been granted are, in the order of their 1931 frequency, cruelty, desertion, adultery, and failure to provide. The last-named is numerically third among the "causes" of divorces granted to wives. It rarely appears when a husband seeks a divorce. Desertion and adultery are alleged less frequently than fifty years ago, while cruelty is charged much more frequently. However, it is by no means demonstrated that there has been a corresponding change in the behavior of unhappy spouses. Since the laws of some states take account of "mental cruelty," and since this sounds much less "wicked" than adultery, desertion, and drunkenness (which has

Table 64

## PER CENT DISTRIBUTION, BY CAUSE, OF DIVORCES GRANTED TO HUSBAND AND TO WIFE, RESPECTIVELY: 1887 TO 1931 [a]

| *Cause and Party to Whom Granted* | *1931* | *1922* | *1887 to 1906* |
|---|---|---|---|
| TOTAL DIVORCES | | | |
| All causes | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Adultery | 7.5 | 10.9 | 16.3 |
| Cruelty | 42.4 | 34.5 | 21.8 |
| Desertion | 27.9 | 32.8 | 38.9 |
| Drunkenness | 1.5 | 1.0 | 3.9 |
| Neglect to provide | 4.1 | 4.2 | 3.7 |
| Combinations of causes | 8.0 | 8.7 | 9.4 |
| All other causes [b] | 8.6 | 7.8 | 6.1 |
| GRANTED TO HUSBAND | | | |
| All causes | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Adultery | 10.8 | 17.6 | 28.7 |
| Cruelty | 35.0 | 25.0 | 10.5 |
| Desertion | 41.9 | 44.3 | 49.4 |
| Drunkenness | 0.4 | 0.3 | 1.1 |
| Neglect to provide | — | — | [c] |
| Combinations of causes | 3.9 | 4.6 | 4.5 |
| All other causes [b] | 7.9 | 8.3 | 5.7 |
| GRANTED TO WIFE | | | |
| All causes | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Adultery | 6.3 | 7.7 | 10.0 |
| Cruelty | 45.1 | 39.0 | 27.5 |
| Desertion | 22.7 | 27.4 | 33.6 |
| Drunkenness | 2.0 | 1.4 | 5.3 |
| Neglect to provide | 5.6 | 6.2 | 5.5 |
| Combinations of causes | 9.5 | 10.6 | 11.8 |
| All other causes [b] | 8.9 | 7.6 | 6.4 |

[a] *Marriage and Divorce, 1931* (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1932]), p. 15.

[b] Includes "Cause not reported."

[c] Less than one tenth of 1 per cent.

also diminished as a ground of divorce), we are led to infer again that the stigma popularly attached to the divorcee is declining.

Another interesting fact pointed out by the Bureau of the Census is that most divorces are granted to the wife, and the proportion has been steadily increasing. In the late nineteenth century, less than two thirds (65.8 per cent) of all divorces were granted to wives. By 1931, they were granted nearly three fourths (72.8 per cent).[10] This seems to indicate that there is more social pressure against a man than against a woman seeking divorce. "It just isn't cricket" for a husband to charge his wife with the faults that must be alleged in order to secure the desired freedom. So, we suspect, a good many men who wish to get out of unhappy marriages let their wives "reverse the charges." This may be chivalry, but it presents these husbands to the public in an unfavorable light.

It is believed by some people who have not examined the facts that most divorces are secured by young people shortly after they have "married in haste." But the census data show that divorces granted in 1931 dissolved a great many marriages which had lasted a good while. The duration of only 4.2 per cent was less than a year, and of only 36.3 per cent less than five years. Indeed, more than a third (35.2 per cent) had endured for ten years or longer.[11] Perhaps this means that serious difficulties arise after couples have been married several years. Perhaps it is the result of accumulating tensions. Perhaps the troubles develop early, but unhappy spouses are restrained by a fear of what "they" will say. If the last supposition is correct, we have another indication of the strength of the social stigma imposed upon divorced persons. But again we are indulging in inferences, and our evidence is only circumstantial.

It is worthy of note that throughout the period 1887–1931 children were reported as affected by the divorce decree in only two

[10] *Marriage and Divorce, 1931* (U. S. Bureau of the Census), p. 17.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

fifths of the cases.[12] Several inferences might be drawn from this fact. Perhaps children deter parents from seeking divorce. Perhaps the presence of children makes courts less willing to grant divorces. Possibly couples that have no children are made up of persons who prefer to avoid many of the responsibilities of family life. In any case, most divorces do not involve the readjustment of young children. The freedom from this complication should relieve the divorcees themselves from some embarrassment.

*"Causes" of Divorce.* In relation to divorce, the word cause is used with at least three different meanings. It may mean, as in the preceding section, grounds on which the law permits a divorce to be granted, and hence the charges that must be made in court by a plaintiff. In the second place, it may refer to factors involved in marital conflict, and showing a positive correlation therewith regardless of whether they are mentioned in court. Finally, it may have to do with factors associated with a rising divorce rate.

As to the first, we have already observed that the grounds most frequently utilized in legal proceedings are, in order, cruelty, desertion, and adultery. But these are often a rationalization or camouflage for "real" causes, according to those who have studied this problem with care. Mowrer examined 466 Chicago cases, and found a wide discrepancy between the "legal causes" and what he called "natural causes." Thus, desertion was frequently alleged when the basic difficulty appeared to be financial tension. Most cases of alleged cruelty seemed also to be rooted in conflict over money matters. Charges of adultery, on the other hand, seemed usually to be based on actual extramarital relations.[13] Obviously our search for the forces which are at work in these cases must take us behind the court records into the marital history and even into the backgrounds of the men and women whose marriages are shipwrecked.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[13] Ernest R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization* (1927), p. 68.

Bodenhafer has classified the factors examined in various studies into those (1) in general societal conditions, (2) in a more limited environment, (3) in the household, and (4) in the personalities of the mates.[14] The first two groups of factors involve the third use of the word cause discussed at the beginning of this section. The third and fourth groups involve the second use. We shall summarize Bodenhafer's account in the order he has followed. Among the general societal conditions which are correlated with divorce are urbanization, employment of women, and economic production; there is a negative correlation of divorce and birth rates. In other words, divorce is more common in cities than in the country and increases as the percentage of the population that is urban increases. Divorce is more frequent where many women are employed outside the home than where women wage earners are fewer. Divorce is more common in periods of prosperity than in those of depression. Finally, in times and places with high birth rates divorce is rarer than in those where the birth rates are low. In all these relationships, it is not clear which factor is cause and which is effect or whether both are the results of something else. For example, how can we tell whether women have few children because they get divorces, or get divorces because they have few children, or tend to avoid both maternity and wifehood for some other reason? Again, how can we determine whether women get divorces because they are working, or go to work because they get divorces, or seek both employment and divorces because of still another factor? It may someday be possible to answer these questions, but for the present we can only offer the hypothesis that there is no simple, cause-and-effect relationship. Urbanization, employment of women, economic production, and birth rates should probably be regarded as items in a constellation or series, the whole of which must be considered. Furthermore, the discovery of a correlation between

[14] Stuart A. Queen, Walter B. Bodenhafer, and Ernest B. Harper, *Social Organization and Disorganization* (1935), pp. 117–31.

these general conditions and divorce rates does not explain why some of the persons exposed to these conditions seek divorces while most of them do not. This calls for further research.

Turning from general societal conditions to factors in a more limited environment, we find some evidence of a relationship between marital conflict and the kind of district in which a family lives.[15] From his studies in Chicago, Mowrer has reached the conclusion that divorce and desertion are more frequent near the heart of a city than on its periphery. But within the inner city, there are significant differences. In certain sections, which Mowrer calls "emancipated family areas," both desertion and divorce are common. These districts are identified by the presence of rooming houses, kitchenette apartments, and residential hotels. There are few children. Both husband and wife are apt to be employed. In what Mowrer calls "paternal family areas," there is considerable desertion but little divorce. These are sections occupied by immigrants with large families. The husband is head of the family and "woman's place is in the home." The predominant religion is Roman Catholic or Orthodox Jewish. Perhaps most important of all, the people are often members of rather well-knit ethnic communities. In what Mowrer calls "equalitarian family areas," there is some desertion but more divorce. These are middle-class sections where families are small. Wives are usually not gainfully occupied, but they have other interests outside the home. Finally, Mowrer identified "maternal family areas," suburban districts, where the wife is head of the family so far as strictly local affairs are concerned, since the man is in the city all day attending to his profession or business. Here Mowrer found very little family disruption. The implication of all this is that men and women are responsive to the mores of their local community or neighborhood, and that, when they have few ties in the immediate vicinity, their behavior is less restrained. That is, if the code of their local group forbids divorce,

[15] Ernest R. Mowrer, *The Family* (1932), chap. 9.

they will seldom seek it. But if group sentiment is more tolerant, they will more readily break their marital ties. If they live in an area of high mobility and anonymity, they tend to respond to their own immediate impulses without much concern about what other people may say or think.

It has sometimes been held that factors in the household are important determiners of domestic harmony or discord. Mention has been made of privacy, furnishings, multiple versus single dwellings, rented versus owned homes, income, and the like. In the analysis previously mentioned, Bodenhafer found no clear evidence that these factors have any significant relation to divorce or to the antecedent marital conflict.

This brings us to factors in the personalities of the mates. From her experience as consultant to the Jewish Social Service Bureau of Chicago, Mrs. Mowrer concludes that "the pattern of domestic discord is determined to a large extent by the ways in which the individual has adjusted to problems prior to marriage." [16] She discovered among warring husbands and wives cases of "conflicting roles," sometimes called "mental conflict," personalities not at peace with themselves. She found some who played "dual roles," Dr. Jekylls and Mr. Hydes. She identified various "escape mechanisms" such as illness, drink, and phantasy. But Mrs. Mowrer does not tell us how frequently these personality traits appear. Neither does she compare their incidence in discordant families with the frequency of their appearance in harmonious families.

In their effort to devise a means of predicting success in marriage, Burgess and Cottrell have thrown some light on differences between divorced couples, separated couples, those that have contemplated divorce or separation, and those that have not contemplated either.[17] They defined marital adjustment in terms of the

[16] Harriet R. Mowrer, *Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord* (1935), p. xxiii. By permission of American Book Company.

[17] Ernest W. Burgess and Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., "The Prediction of Adjustment in Marriage," *American Sociological Review*, 1 (1936), 737–51.

persons' own expressed opinions, agreement on "critical issues in the relationship," common interests and activities, demonstrations of affection, absence of regret, and a minimum of complaint. They worked out a system for scoring the answers to specific questions, a scale for rating happiness in marriage, and finally a scale for predicting marital adjustment. In their scheme, the possible range of prediction scores is from 220 to 790. Applying this to 540 couples, they found that 50 per cent of those with scores under 300 had been divorced, while 90 per cent of those with scores over 700 had not even contemplated divorce or separation.

In a more elaborate study, Terman found certain personal characteristics and experiences highly correlated with marital happiness. By way of inference, it may be supposed that their absence or their opposites are associated with marital discord and hence indirectly with divorce. Among these characteristics and experiences are listed childhood happiness, firm but not harsh home discipline, strong attachment to parents, and "premarital attitude toward sex that was free from disgust or aversion." [18] As part of his research, Terman gave two well-known tests (Bernreuter personality inventory and Strong interest test) to 341 married couples and 109 divorced couples. He found the greatest differences between the scores of happy and divorced husbands in neurotic tendency (introversion) and in the sort of interests associated with Y.M.C.A. work and the teaching profession. He found the greatest differences between the scores of happy and divorced wives in the matters of self-sufficiency, masculinity-femininity, and teacher interest. When he considered spouses whom he classified as unhappy but not divorced, he got some curious results. Thus, he rated unhappy husbands most masculine, divorced husbands least masculine, and the happy about midway between.[19]

[18] Lewis M. Terman, *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness* (1938), p. 372.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Some students of family life have long believed that more importance should be attached to the combinations of personality traits in husband and wife than to their individual characteristics viewed separately. It has been supposed that difficulties tend to arise from diversity of age, vitality, intelligence, education, and personal habits. However, we have very few objective data to support these propositions. Terman sheds some light on this problem of diversity in personality by demonstrating the presence of greater husband-wife resemblance among happily married couples than among divorced couples in the matters of dominance, introversion, and the following occupational interest types—office clerk, Y.M.C.A. worker, and certified public accountant. On the other hand, he found little difference in the degree of husband-wife resemblance between happily married couples and divorced couples in the matters of self-sufficiency, interest maturity, masculinity-femininity, and the following occupational interest types—teacher, insurance salesman, and chemist.[20] Perhaps further research will demonstrate that resemblance or diversity per se is less significant than certain combinations of unlike personality traits.

One further comment should be made before leaving the problem of causation in marital conflict and divorce. It is that we will probably learn more from the study of sequences of events and conditions than from their separate listing. In other words, we believe that attention should be given to chronological series which may identify dynamic processes. We doubt if any of the items, personal or environmental, constitutes by itself an explanation of any case of domestic discord. We suspect that the significance of each factor will be found to lie in its combination with other factors in types of sequences or processes which are yet to be identified.

*Postdivorce Adjustments.* In contrast to the large amount of attention that has been devoted to the "causes" of divorce, very

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

little work has been done on the sequelae or aftermath. Perhaps the best study of readjustments following divorce is that of Waller, and even it deals with a very small sample.[21] Waller made an intensive, nonstatistical study of the postdivorce adjustments of 35 middle-class couples. From this, he discovered that divorced persons have a half-dozen different kinds of personal problems, which have to do with (1) their love (sex) life, (2) their personal habits, (3) their wounded pride, (4) their social relationships, (5) financial affairs, and (6) mental conflict. Even though the divorce has been anticipated, and even though there be a sense of relief from conflict, there is a change in life organization which is rather startling to some and trying to nearly all. Old habits are interrupted; old status is destroyed. The divorcee has to make a new start, but without complete release from that which has gone before.

The sex adjustments of divorced persons are of several sorts. Some subject themselves to "sexual starvation," both in the physical sense and in the sense of avoiding company of the opposite sex. Some make their adjustment to sex on a purely physical level, indulging in promiscuity which may even be commercialized. Others join the "bohemians," engaging in "promiscuity on a higher plane." Some achieve sublimation through phantasy or devotion to work, relatives, or religion. Others seek to drown their memories in drink. Some find new mates and reorganize their lives in the new relationship. Note that some of these attempted adjustments involve partial isolation: some commit the divorcee to the restricted circle of unconventional folks; while sublimation through remarriage and creative activity indicate the renewal or the extension of social participation. Along with sex, other phases of one's personal life have to be modified when a marriage has been broken. In the preparation of meals, the care of clothes, attention to the house, yard, and car, recreational activities, special attention in time of sickness, and other-

[21] Willard Waller, *The Old Love and the New* (1930).

wise, husband and wife usually become mutually dependent. Their habits are literally interwoven. These are commonly broken before the divorce, granting the decree emphasizes the disruption.

Wounded pride and social relationships are closely bound together. There is often a sense of defeat. Even if the mate is blamed for the failure, the "innocent" party may feel guilty of having made a poor choice in the first place. Actually, of course, both have made some contribution to the breakdown of their marriage, and neither can wholly escape awareness of this. When the conflict comes into the open, curiosity is aroused and people gossip. In groups to which the mate has belonged or maybe still belongs, a divorcee does not quite know how he or she stands. Shall he greet the ex-spouse casually, cordially, or coolly? Shall he discuss his troubles with friends and acquaintances or keep his own counsel? When others mention the former husband or wife what shall be the response? Then there are the questions of what to tell the children, if any, what to say to the newspapers, employers, or business associates. If the divorcee is condemned by church or kinsmen or friends, shall he do penance, assume indifference, run away, or stay and defend his conduct? All these are difficult problems to which there is no standard solution. In the midst of an often tense situation, the divorced person has the task of restoring his own self-confidence and self-respect while he reorganizes his status in the community.

The economic consequences of divorce are different for men and for women. The ex-husband may go ahead in his job, business, or profession, but he is frequently hampered by the attitudes of those who know about his divorce and disapprove. He may find his actual income reduced by the payment of alimony. He may even lose customers, clients, or employment. The last is most likely to happen if he has occupied a position of public confidence and trust, as that of clergyman, teacher, or banker. But if his position is not one of prominence and if his ex-wife does not demand alimony, his budget may not be greatly disturbed. The woman, on the other hand, is

often under the necessity of re-establishing herself in a former vocation or of preparing herself for a new one. If she is unaccustomed to working outside the home, if she has no special skills, or if she has been away from her former trade or profession a long time, she may find this adjustment very difficult. If the family has unusual wealth, some division of property may meet her financial needs. Alimony may solve her immediate problem. But alimony is sometimes impossible; its payment is often uncertain; it can hamper the man without giving the woman security.

Even though a court decision may end a marital relationship officially, it cannot destroy lingering doubts as to the wisdom of steps taken, longing for happiness that is no more or that was never attained, shaken self-confidence, and memories that arise to plague the divorcee. Guilt feelings and self-pity may be altogether devastating. We suspect that the solution of these subjective or inner problems must go hand in hand with the solution of the objective or environmental problems already discussed.

The restrictions on social participation which are often the lot of the divorcee have been interestingly brought out in a study of the spatial distribution of 5,600 divorced women in Philadelphia in 1930.[22]

First, they seek out areas of dense population, characterized by activity, mobility, and anonymity, and where housing conditions make possible a certain independence of residence. On the other hand, they avoid areas of sparse population, of spatial isolation, and of religious prejudice.

The divorced woman presents, then, essentially a study in social isolation. She seeks the distractions of city life, but selects areas where she may be socially isolated. She seeks escape in the crowd, not in the wilderness. She wants human contacts, but avoids prying eyes. She places a premium upon privacy, and finds it in a crowded apartment house. She seeks friends, not in the continued associations of a primary group, but in

[22] James H. S. Bossard and Thelma Dillon, "The Spatial Distribution of Divorced Women—A Philadelphia Study," *American Journal of Sociology*, 40 (1935), 503–07. By permission of The University of Chicago Press.

come-and-go relations with a mobile neighborhood. It is this characterizing search—for stimulation, coupled with secrecy, for contact, with relatively less communication—which seems to offer the basic key to the spatial distribution of divorced women in Philadelphia.

*Remarriage of Divorced Persons.* If a divorced person remarries, that is itself a form of social participation. If the marriage is a success, in the sense of enduring and giving satisfaction to the spouses, that is a further degree of social participation. Moreover, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we are inclined to assume that happily married people participate more freely in other groups than those who are not making a go of their marriage. As a matter of fact, Burgess and Cottrell found in their study of 526 couples that high marriage-adjustment scores tended to be associated with membership in several organized groups, while low scores were more often associated with membership in few groups or none.[23] For these reasons, we regard the marriage rate for divorcees to be one of the best possible indexes of their general social participation.

It happens that no complete report has ever been made on this point, but there have been several attempts to estimate the percentage of divorcees who marry again. Two of the most careful estimates are those of Cahen and of Rubinow.[24] Both recognize that census enumerations of divorced persons are very inaccurate. Nevertheless, both start with the number reported as being divorced persons at a given date, add those who became divorced during a period following, subtract those who probably died during this period, and infer that the remainder remarried. The procedure was modified by both Rubinow and Cahen, but in different ways and with different results. Thus Rubinow assumed that the actual numbers of divorced persons living in 1910 and in 1930 were twice the

[23] Burgess and Cottrell, *op. cit.*, p. 749.

[24] Alfred Cahen, *Statistical Analysis of American Divorce* (1932), chap. 7. I. M. Rubinow, "Some Statistical Aspects of Marriage and Divorce," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Pamphlet Serie No. 3 (1936).

numbers reported by the Bureau of the Census. He estimated that the death rate among divorcees might be twice that of the married population in general. From these data and assumptions, he concluded that 62.7 per cent of divorced persons remarried during the 20 years. Cahen believed the numbers of divorcees living at any given time to be four times those reported by the Bureau of the Census. He arrived at this estimate by a thorough checking of a prison population. Even after deducting those who were divorced on the ground of felony or imprisonment, he found the percentage of divorcees to be four times that reported by the Census. Cahen accepted this ratio as representative on the ground that prisoners could not easily conceal their marital status while free men could and did. He offers no very convincing evidence, however, that divorce is as common among law-abiding folk as among criminals. But if we accept his assumption, it leads to the estimate that 27.7 per cent of divorced persons remarried during the 20 years.[25] This is less than half of Rubinow's figure. The summary of the two series of computations, modified so as to be entirely comparable, appears in Table 65.

Other estimates range from 30 per cent to 80 per cent. Popenoe, from data assembled at the Institute of Family Relations in Los Angeles, concludes that only about one third of all divorcees ever remarry.[26] He believes that the chances of remarriage are much greater for men than for women. "The middle-aged divorced woman has little chance of remarriage unless she possesses unusual qualifications, such as personality, wealth, or social status." As to the divorcees who do find new mates, Popenoe found their percentage of success to be about the same as that of persons married for the first time. Studying 1,000 remarriages after divorce, he

[25] Cahen himself used only a ten-year period and arrived at an estimate of 31 per cent.

[26] Paul Popenoe, "Divorce and Remarriage from a Eugenic Point of View," *Social Forces*, 12 (1933), 48–50.

Table 65

ESTIMATES OF REMARRIAGE OF DIVORCEES, ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES USED BY RUBINOW AND CAHEN [a]

| | *U. S. Census* | *Rubinow* | *Cahen* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Divorced Persons in 1910 | 341,000 | 682,000 | 1,364,000 |
| Divorced 1910–1930 | 5,615,000 | 5,615,000 | 5,615,000 |
| Total | 5,956,000 | 6,297,000 | 6,979,000 |
| Died 1910–1930 | | 330,000 | 698,000 |
| Balance | | 5,967,000 | 6,181,000 |
| Divorced Persons in 1930 | 1,062,500 | 2,125,000 | 4,250,000 |
| Remarried | | 3,842,000 | 1,931,000 |

[a] Rubinow, *op. cit.*, p. 29; Cahen, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

rated 62 per cent as happy, 12 per cent as doubtful, and 26 per cent as unhappy. The percentage of happy marriages in the general population, he estimated at about 70. This was based on a study of 10,000 marriages "of more than five years duration in the normal, educated part of the whole American population."

To sum up these conflicting estimates, we have reason to believe that at least one third, and possibly two thirds, of divorced persons remarry. Of these, perhaps two thirds make a success of their second marriage. If so, two ninths to four ninths of all divorcees make a marital readjustment, which indicates a capacity for considerable social participation. To these should be added the unknown number of divorcees who, though remaining in that category, play a "normal" part in various social groups and cultural activities, continuing old roles or finding new ones.

## Suggested Readings

Bossard, J. H. S., and Dillon, Thelma, "The Spatial Distribution of Divorced Women—A Philadelphia Study," *American Journal of*

*Sociology*, 40 (1935), 503–07. Reveals the isolation, anonymity, and mobility of divorcees as indicated by the sections in which they live.

Cahen, Alfred, *Statistical Analysis of American Divorce*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1932. Chapter 7 contains the analysis of remarriage of divorcees discussed in the foregoing pages.

Popenoe, Paul, "Divorce and Remarriage from a Eugenic Point of View," *Social Forces*, 12 (1933), 48–50. Data from the Institute of Family Relations in Los Angeles.

Reuter, E. B., and Runner, Jessie R., *The Family*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1931. Chapter 16 presents conflicting attitudes and opinions concerning divorce.

Ross, Eva J., *A Survey of Sociology*. New York: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1932. Chapter 19 sets forth the Catholic position on divorce, with several quotations from papal encyclicals.

Rubinow, I. M., "Some Statistical Aspects of Marriage and Divorce," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Pamphlet Series No. 3, 1936. Includes the analysis of remarriage of divorcees discussed in the foregoing pages.

Waller, Willard, *The Old Love and the New*. New York: Horace Liveright, 1930. An intensive study of postdivorce adjustments of 35 middle-class couples.

## Projects for Further Study

1. If the class has access to data from a "census-tract" city, plot the distribution of divorcees. Compute the ratio of divorcees to the total population fifteen years of age and over; rank census tracts according to these ratios. Is there a marked or only a relatively slight concentration of divorced persons? Is this different for men and for women? If there is concentration, what other features characterize the areas in which divorcees are most numerous? Note particularly residential mobility, rooming houses, delinquency, suicide.

2. If data from the court of domestic relations are available, plot the distribution of residences of persons to whom divorces were granted during the last five years. How does this correspond to the distribution of divorcees reported by the United States Census? What reasons may be offered for the pattern? Does it appear that wealthy persons leave the city to secure divorces?

3. Inquire of selected interest groups—clubs, lodges, churches—whether their membership includes divorcees and, if so, how many or what proportion. Do the persons interviewed indicate that their groups condemn divorce and ostracize divorcees? If so, what reasons do they offer?

4. Assemble statistics for city or state indicating the number of divorce suits, divorces granted, various causes alleged, alimony requested and granted or refused, cases involving young children.

5. Read T. Earl Sullenger's *Children of Divorce* and talk with social workers in children's institutions and other agencies concerning the number of children of divorced parents which have been placed in the last five years. What adjustment problems have the children presented? In what ways have these involved their own parents, other children, teachers, social workers? Perhaps one member of the class might make a study of the present status of children of divorcees placed in foster homes or institutions several years ago, noting their schooling, vocations, marriage, and various group affiliations.

6. Devise a schedule to elicit attitudes toward divorced persons. Follow either the Bogardus or the Thurstone plan. If time permits, develop a simple scale for measuring these attitudes. Apply this to the class and to any other groups willing to fill out the schedule. Do there appear to be similarities in attitudes toward divorcees, unmarried mothers, alcoholics, syphilitics? To which group does most opprobrium seem to be attached?

7. Write the story of a divorced person in terms of the changes in his personal relationships—to kinsmen, children, friends, employers, members of vocational groups; churches, lodges, and the like—group participation, cultural activities. Compare the experiences of this person with those described by Waller, *The Old Love and the New.*

8. Assemble news items concerning divorce from the local papers. What general attitudes are indicated—condemnation, approval, indifference, entertainment?

9. Compare attitudes toward divorce in different cultural groups. Make use of such books as Willystine Goodsell, *History of Marriage and the Family*, George P. Murdock, *Our Primitive Contemporaries*, E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States.*

10. Note the treatment of divorce in works of fiction and in the movies. What do these indicate as to expected popular responses?

# *Chapter 21*

# CHILD LABOR

FOR many years, opposition to child labor has constituted one of the outstanding reform movements of the United States. A certain humanitarian appeal has rallied many adherents to its support during the long history and exposé of children laboring in factories, in berry fields, or toiling at industrial homework. The publicity and legislation thus stimulated have minimized, during the course of years, widespread flagrant abuses of children exploited as wage earners. The chief objections have been directed against the employment of children in factories, with close confinement for long hours in unhealthful surroundings, straining their growing bodies in cramped and awkward positions. The working children have had less freedom for development than their nonlaboring brothers. Play life has been interrupted if not eliminated. Health has been impaired. Education has been cut short. Vocational advancement has been restricted since many of the jobs are of the "blind-alley" variety. Although child labor in its true sense has diminished considerably during the last two decades, it is by no means a thing of the past.

Before we proceed further, distinction must be made between child labor which is detrimental and the work of children which may prove beneficial and is certainly not productive of any of the harmful effects mentioned above.[1] Many children put their spare time to good use by doing errands or taking part-time jobs to earn

[1] Raymond G. Fuller, *Child Labor and the Constitution* (1923), pp. 2–3. The author defines "child labor" as "work that interferes with a full living of the life of childhood and with the best possible preparation for adulthood."

money for incidental expenses, without damage to their health or future. Edward Walters, we recall, busied himself with his paper route, saved some money for his clothing and education, with no interference to his health or schooling. It has been considered a useful principle of child training that a boy or girl should be assigned some simple tasks around the house or yard to develop responsibility and initiative. Some children have even been able to supplement their parents' income with suitable employment. But when the pressure for the additional increment to the family income becomes so great that children are forced into difficult work with small pay and few satisfactions, and are deprived thereby of the more normal life of children, we talk in terms of "child labor." The following stories illustrate some of the issues involved.

### Tony, a Messenger Boy [2]

Tony has to get up at five in the morning to deliver papers, after sleeping three in a bed for the night. Tony's father is a molder by trade, working in a steel mill. During the war boom and afterwards, he earned as much as $40 a week, but not lately. In 1930, he was laid off his molder's job, and all he can get now is a few days' work a week as laborer about the mill at $2 a day.

Tony has turned out to be a good telegraph messenger; for two years now, he has kept his job. When he sold papers after school, things had not gone so well. He used to fight a lot, and his father had to come along to smooth things out. But after all, he began work when he was twelve, and had five hours of it every day after school and on Saturdays, beginning at three and never getting home until between eight and nine. Now Tony's brothers, three of them, have each in turn gone into newsboy work; the boys, aged fifteen and thirteen, sell on the streets after school, their hours about the same as Tony's used to be, and the younger one, aged eleven, has a paper route early in the morning before school. Tony had started to high school. Then things got bad at home, and he

[2] Adapted from Katharine Lumpkin and Dorothy Douglas, *Child Workers in America* (1937), pp. 121–4. By permission of the authors.

began to fall down in his lessons. About that time, more homework was required; it was harder than ever for Tony to keep up with his class. His late hours sent him to school many a day with lessons untouched. His father got tired of his fighting, too. "No more trouble," his father says, since Tony is at work full time. But now his younger brother is complaining about school, his teacher is "mean" to him, he wants to get out and work, and he probably would, except that he can't find a job.

The boy's home is a pretty barren place. Tony is sorry for his mother, so tired all the time. Cooking all the meals, washing dishes, washing and ironing clothes (a frequently repeated task because they have so few changes), marketing for the cheapest groceries, which takes time and blocks of tramping, little help from the children, with the four oldest at work or school until eight or nine at night. Tony's mother doesn't get much time to scrub and sweep "till things shine." What some of Tony's friends' homes have, his does not—little furnishings, bought on installments, that make it nice—a radio best of all. When they used to live in a better house—since given up for this place and its cheaper rent —they used to plan on the things they would someday buy. Now they are in debt for doctor's bills because his mother was very sick for a while. Tony's people never did go in much for reading; books and magazines are not around the place; his father doesn't care about reading, and his mother would not have time if she did care; the most they have is a paper the boys bring home once in a while. Tony is off work after eight hours, but he likes to go over to the boys' club at the "Y," especially for the sports, so on those nights his supper waits until he gets home. If he could, Tony would go to the club almost nightly, but his parents are old-fashioned and want him to stay at home more. They argue, and he rebels; especially he rebels against his father's sternness, which has always been a little harsh. Only through his mother's intervention does he get the privileges he enjoys. She reminds his father that "after all, Tony works."

### Mary Works at Home [8]

Mary does not understand. But she knows she loathes what she has to do, with all her heart, and that is to string tags or cut threads after

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

school and again after supper until she goes to bed, every evening, rain or shine, dark winter night or radiant spring evening with the sun still up. Mary is eight, and lives in Newark; so do her mother and her four brothers and sisters and her grandmother and her father when he is not away from home looking for work as he is now. They occupy a four-room flat in a two-family house, and the kitchen where they do their industrial homework is also their living room and dining room.

Mary's mother has tried all kinds of homework for her family. Finishing men's clothing paid the best for a while, but the bundles were so terribly heavy for John the oldest, aged eleven, and he had to cross the track to get them. Grandma worried about him all the time he was out, and the boss was awfully mean and would just as soon keep him waiting two or three hours for the next bundle. So lately they have been working on powder puffs and stringing tags and finally making doll clothes. "Powder puffs make me sick. I had to have a change," says Mary. (She is a determined young woman and knows her mind—she means the monotony of turning and filling the puff ready for its final closing. Her little fingers are not adroit enough for the more difficult sewing.) Tags lasted for a while, until the market became overcrowded, and the only kind of knots they wanted you to make were the meanest ones. Mother and Grandma tried beadwork for a time and found plenty to do on it, but the children not so much.

Finally, for a number of months, it has been doll clothes. Here all the family can work, though the rates are terribly low. Mary would not mind it so much if she could perform all the four processes that the various children do: cutting the threads, clipping apart the trimming from one dress to the next (Mother stitches them on the machine in batches, to save time), turning the finished garments right side out, and packing them in a box. But Mother finds it goes faster if each child does just one thing. And there is a big pile in front of each of them. Also the hours on this have to run extra long to make up for the low pay. Mary works from 3:30 to 5 in the afternoon and again from 6 to 9 o'clock after supper. So do her sister and brother of ten and eleven. Even little Jackie, aged four, does a little off and on in the afternoon and after supper; then Grandma puts him to bed. Mother works on, as late as she may have to, under pressure, to finish the lot. "Sometimes I think I will go crazy," she says, "the work is so tedious."

### The McRays [4]

John McRay was born on a farm. Neither his father (a farmer) nor his mother had ever been to school. Neither could read or write. John McRay had helped on the farm as soon as he was old enough. He got through the second grade in the little country school of his district, and then, having reached ten years of age, he never saw the inside of a school again. From that time, he did nothing but help his father on the farm. When he was about seventeen, however, he decided to go to town to the mill village he had heard about and try to find work. Here he met a girl who had been working in the spinning room since she was twelve, and they were married. Here he lived for some twenty years.

Mrs. McRay had been to school only one year, so she could barely write her name. Her parents had had no schooling at all, although her father had learned to read ever so little. Just as Mr. McRay's people had been farmers, so Mrs. McRay's people had been cotton-mill workers. When the McRays married, Mrs. McRay quit work. The McRays had eight children, though the youngest was not born until the eldest had left home for good. The children came about two years apart, so Mrs. McRay had never felt she could leave the youngest to go back to the mill to work.

For eighteen years, Mr. McRay was a weaver in the cotton mill. Every once in a while, he would talk about moving back to a farm, but he never did. In late years, his wages were $20 a week. They had to support a family of nine. There was an oldest daughter who ordinarily would have gone to work to help out, but when she tried to get a job at fourteen, there was none to be had in the mill. Then she got married and moved away.

They lived in four rooms, a frame structure, sitting high on stiltlike brick pillars as supports. The house fronted directly on a street that was in reality a rutted dirt road. Along the same street were other houses exactly like it in color and shape and appearance. Across the street others still. In the yard was the usual outdoor privy. They got their water from a spigot serving several families living in a number of near-by houses. The kitchen was small and used for both cooking and

[4] Adapted from Katharine Lumpkin and Dorothy Douglas, *Child Workers in America* (1937), pp. 164–7. By permission of the authors.

eating. Only the barest necessities could be purchased, and these were of poorest quality. There had never been enough to buy household furnishings on installments as some families managed to do. The children had come too fast and there were too many of them. The McRays' problem had been to feed and clothe them and keep them in a school. This they barely managed to do.

About 1927 or 1928, the mill where Mr. McRay worked began running on short time. The income was now almost cut in half because the mill was going only a few days a week. The oldest daughter, who at this time was still at home, was without work. Mr. McRay now talked more than ever of going back to a farm. The family could hardly scrape together enough for food.

After this had gone on for a while and work at the mill did not improve, Mr. McRay one day picked up his family with its few belongings and moved twenty miles out of town onto a farm. He had made his arrangements with the owner of the place a short time before. Mr. McRay now became a sharecropper; at the next census his wife and most of his children would be listed as "unpaid family labor."

The planter on whose land he became a tenant made with Mr. McRay the customary sharecropping arrangements. Mr. McRay was furnished forty acres and a four-room frame house which was poor and dilapidated (worse than the mill-village house they had left, which at least was plastered inside). He was furnished with the necessary mule, farming equipment, and seeds, such as a cropper on a small allotment customarily gets. And from one year to the next, he was allowed food on credit at the store, the supplies usually allowed a white cropper—meal, occasionally flour, molasses, fat-back pork, a little sugar and coffee; to which they added some sweet potatoes, collards, and greens raised in a garden. Under the arrangement, the landlord got half the crop and Mr. McRay the other half—except that out of his half Mr. McRay had to pay back to the landlord all he had been advanced in food and seed and other supplies.

The McRay family was miserable. All the children who were old enough helped in the field and in the work at home. With the children's assistance, Mrs. McRay not only did all the cooking, cleaning, washing, and ironing, but she helped in the fields as well. The farm was far from neighbors and schools. They had no means of getting to town unless they walked or rode in a farm wagon four miles to a bus, and then they

had no fare for the bus. The nearest school was three miles away, and the children must walk to get there, hence the younger ones attended very little.

The second child, a boy, meanwhile became fourteen and decided he would go into town to his aunt's home and try to find work in the mill. But when he got there, he found there was no work to be had. He could not go to high school, for, although he had completed the eighth grade and was bright in school, he had not the clothes or "book money." He began to wander about from town to town in search of jobs. His father tried to locate him to get him to come home; he did not like the boy's going about like that. The boy meanwhile had found little work during the months he was away, and the final discouragement came when the place at which he was temporarily employed closed down, so he decided to return again to the farm.

He found the home more run-down than ever. The family was barely scraping along. The house was almost devoid of furniture except beds, a table or two, some chairs barely holding up, a cookstove, and a few utensils. A newspaper was unheard of. The family Bible was literally the only cultural feature the home possessed, and it was used only as an ornament. There were few contacts even with neighbors, much less with the outside world. There was hardly time for anything but work, for every member had to help about the home and farm. The family routine lasted from daylight to dark. The farmer, like so many sharecroppers, managed to feed his wife and children at all only by going continually into debt on the crop that was not yet harvested. Their food was monotonous and unpalatable as it had always been.

The family had left the mill village, and the father with his eighteen years' experience as a weaver, hoping to better their lot. Twenty dollars a week, and when the mill ran short time sometimes only $15 or even $10, had been hardly enough to feed and clothe his family of nine and keep the children from being hungry all the time. They had never been able to buy anything beyond the bare necessities, never better clothes or a few things for the house, not even on the installment plan. Now in the four years he had been living on the farm, matters were still worse; and this in spite of the combined labor of himself, his wife, and all the older children. Mr. McRay said he had not made even as much as he was making in the years when he worked in the mill, not even as much as he made after wages were slashed.

These are children employed in recent years. Tony was forced to quit school because he could not keep up and hold his job, even though his work did not necessarily come during school hours. Mary and her brother attended school, and were not limited there in their contacts, but their time after school was occupied in increasing the family income by their little contribution. The opportunities of the McRays, like those of the H family in Chapter 17, included little social life in school or elsewhere. But their condition was accentuated by the additional stigma of the class in which they found themselves. As Mr. McRay himself put it, they would have been better off had he continued to work for the mill.

*Extent of Child Labor.* Unfortunately, for our purpose, statistics of child labor do not differentiate between types of work that injure the growing child physically, intellectually, or morally, and the types which either do no harm or actually contribute to his development. Moreover, data at our disposal have other limitations. Thus, the whole class of children who are members of sharecroppers' families, and as such are working as part of the family in the fields, do not appear in the census figures from which we get our most comprehensive measure of the extent of the problem. Nor does the census include children under ten years of age who may be gainfully occupied. Hence, the most inclusive figures available fail to cover a great many child laborers. However, the omissions are probably fewer than in past years. Thus, the declining numbers of child laborers reported represent a real decrease. The various state laws fixing age minima beneath which children may not work have been effective in reducing considerably the number under ten who are working. The total number of children from ten to fifteen years of age who have been recorded as gainfully employed by the last three censuses shows a decrease from 1,990,225, or 18.4 per cent of the total population of that age in 1910, to 667,118, or 4.7 per cent of the total juvenile population in 1930.[5] Undoubtedly, the 1930

[5] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 5, p. 115.

figures were influenced in part by the depression, but they show a definite trend away from child labor. The 1920 figures, assembled during a period when a Federal Child Labor Law was in force, showed a decline from 1910. Decreases from 1920 to 1930 were noticed in every age group among both male and female, as shown in Table 66, but are especially pronounced for young wage earners

Table 66

NUMBER AND SEX OF PERSONS TEN TO SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE GAINFULLY OCCUPIED—UNITED STATES 1920 AND 1930[a]

| Age | 1930 Total | 1930 Male | 1930 Female | 1920 Total | 1920 Male | 1920 Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10–13 | 235,328 | 162,260 | 73,068 | 378,063 | 258,259 | 119,804 |
| 14 | 157,660 | 110,839 | 46,821 | 257,594 | 174,683 | 82,911 |
| 15 | 274,130 | 187,643 | 86,487 | 425,201 | 281,306 | 143,895 |
| 16 | 587,817 | 386,511 | 201,306 | 778,957 | 501,134 | 277,823 |
| 17 | 891,024 | 577,983 | 313,041 | 933,691 | 602,322 | 331,369 |
| Total | 2,145,959 | 1,425,236 | 720,723 | 2,773,506 | 1,817,704 | 955,802 |
| Per cent of total population | 11.3 | 14.9 | 7.7 | 17.0 | 22.2 | 11.8 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population,* vol. 5, p. 115.

under fourteen years of age. Consistently more boys than girls are employed at all ages, in about the ratio of two to one.

Though children working as members of families are not counted by the census enumerators, agriculture claims more child employees at all ages than does any other general division of occupations. For the sixteen- and seventeen-year age level, manufacturing and mechanical industries are second in importance. Table 67 shows, however, that industrial workers are not found in large numbers in the lower age groups. Trade takes a consistently large group of children. These are office boys, messengers, and bundle girls. Other high quotas are found, also for the sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds,

Table 67

GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL DIVISION OF GAINFUL WORKERS AGED TEN TO SEVENTEEN—1930 [a]

| OCCUPATIONS | AGES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *10–13* | *14* | *15* | *16* | *17* |
| Agriculture | 205,563 | 113,694 | 150,240 | 230,656 | 275,415 |
| Forestry and Fishing | 222 | 408 | 932 | 2,256 | 3,552 |
| Extraction of Minerals | 137 | 198 | 849 | 6,216 | 12,196 |
| Manufacturing and Mechanical Industries | 4,761 | 14,384 | 49,384 | 149,855 | 248,130 |
| Transportation | 583 | 1,831 | 6,303 | 22,486 | 43,852 |
| Trade | 14,746 | 11,879 | 22,990 | 53,636 | 84,712 |
| Public Service (not elsewhere classified) | 143 | 88 | 254 | 786 | 3,480 |
| Professional Service | 969 | 1,147 | 2,728 | 7,537 | 15,538 |
| Domestic and Personal Service | 7,501 | 11,175 | 27,469 | 66,149 | 97,010 |
| Clerical Occupations | 703 | 2,856 | 13,244 | 48,240 | 107,139 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 5, p. 116.

in domestic and personal service and in the clerical group. More sixteen- and seventeen-year-old girls than boys are engaged in domestic and personal service. Similarly, far more of the seventeen-year-old girls than boys are found among the clerical workers. Otherwise, the boys predominate in each classification.

The preponderance of agricultural workers suggests that this particular problem is somewhat localized. In fact, the percentages shown in Table 68 indicate the whole child-labor problem to be primarily a regional one, concentrated in the South Atlantic and in the other Southern states. Although the proportion may be smaller in other parts of the country, some of the industrial states such as Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts have large numbers of children employed in factories and in seasonal trades such as canning, berry and tobacco picking. Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, and Georgia rank highest in the relative numbers of children employed.

Table 68

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFUL WORKERS AGED TEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS—1930 [a]

Per Cent of Total Population of Same Age and Sex

| *Geographical Division* | *Male* | *Female* |
|---|---|---|
| New England | 2.4 | 2.0 |
| Middle Atlantic | 2.0 | 1.8 |
| East North Central | 2.1 | 0.6 |
| West North Central | 4.1 | 0.9 |
| South Atlantic | 12.9 | 5.9 |
| East South Central | 18.2 | 8.7 |
| West South Central | 10.9 | 4.6 |
| Mountain | 4.0 | 1.1 |
| Pacific | 2.2 | 0.5 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 5, p. 381.

Another indication of the numbers of children entering the labor market may be found in the number of employment certificates issued to those leaving school. However, these certificates do not include all cases, since they cover only occupations for which permits may be required, and states differ in the effectiveness with which they enforce the laws. The figures show a reduction in numbers of first certificates issued in most states for which figures are available. In New York City, for example, in 1920, 50,740 children aged fourteen and fifteen sought work permits for the first time. By 1929, this number had been reduced to 35,934. In Boston, the total numbers decreased from 6,118 to 2,847.[6] In Philadelphia, however, no such reduction took place.

A tendency has been noted for juvenile employment to respond to changes of the business cycle, with large numbers employed in times of prosperity and fewer in times of depression. In a study of

[6] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, vol. III-D, *Child Labor* (1932), p. 61.

children to whom employment certificates were issued in Boston during the years 1915 to 1925, Hexter found that indexes computed from these figures of juvenile employment correlated highly with the Federal Reserve Board's and other indexes of business conditions.[7] Despite this response to business conditions and an increase in population, Hexter noted a marked decline in the number of juveniles leaving Boston schools for the labor market.[8]

*Family Relationships.* Although the reasons for children going to work are so numerous and so interrelated that it is difficult to identify any factor as primary, on the whole, two main circumstances seem to account for the majority of cases. The greatest of these is poverty. That is, children go to work because their contributions to the family income are very necessary, and the more hands the greater the income even though the increments by which it is augmented may be small. People point out that children of the well to do are not found in industrial establishments or working in the beet fields. The other essential reason for working is that children do not like school. Many children, both rich and poor, leave school because of being backward and retarded, but not all of these children go to work. There seems, thus, to be an economic need on the family's part as a dominant factor in the employment of children. In the three stories at the beginning of this chapter, earnings from the children were found absolutely necessary to enable the family to live. Tony did not want to leave school, but could not carry on with both school and a job. Especially do families of migratory, agricultural laborers depend on the labor of their children.

The homes of the child workers are not in the main broken by death, desertion, or divorce. The concept of the destitute widow and her children eking out a living through the labor of all members is not applicable to the extent that is sometimes believed. Studies

[7] Maurice B. Hexter, *Juvenile Employment and Labor Mobility in the Business Cycle* (1927), p. 102.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

of families of child laborers made over a number of years by the United States Children's Bureau and the National Child Labor Committee show that only from 15 to 20 per cent represent fatherless homes.[9] This percentage is the same as might be expected from any group of children. "In general," a report to the White House Conference states, "poverty in the homes of young workers appears to be rather a question of low wages and unemployment than of widowed mothers." [10]

Studies of family income, of occupations and earnings of fathers reinforce this view. The average earnings of the chief breadwinner of working children have been shown in some studies of the United States Children's Bureau to be less than the average of workingmen in general. The occupations have been mainly unskilled labor and agricultural pursuits.[11] Most of these studies were made prior to the depression, but the situation of the fathers has not been materially changed; or, if it has, it has been changed for the worse. Too often the father has become totally unemployed, and the earnings of the children thus contribute a vital part to the family's subsistence. A study of 251 families of agricultural workers migrating from Philadelphia to New Jersey for the fruit and vegetable season indicated that average weekly earnings per family ranged from $11.89 to $20.71 at the opening of the season. As the summer advanced, this family income was usually not improved and in some cases earnings were less.[12] Strangely enough, as some educator has said, "Man is the only animal that lives on his young."

*Health and Physical Effects of Employment.* In earlier chapters, we have presented evidence that many physical ailments and

[9] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[11] Publications of the U. S. Children's Bureau, No. 185, *Child Labor in New Jersey*, Part 2, "Children Engaged in Industrial Home Work"; No. 199, *The Working Children of Newark and Paterson;* No. 183, *Children in Street Work.*

[12] "Migrant Child Workers in New Jersey," *Monthly Labor Review*, 48 (1939), 1073.

deficiencies hamper social participation. Here we shall summarize the findings of studies which show that child labor injures physical health and development, thus indirectly restricting the individual's capacity to share in social life.

In the first place, long hours, lack of proper light and air, poor sanitation, necessity for working in cramped positions, and continuous use of the same muscles are injurious to the physical development of children in their formative years. Their growth may be thwarted, their general resistance to disease lowered.

Second, minors seem especially susceptible to industrial accidents which may result in permanent physical impairment. This may be due to varying combinations of clumsiness, carelessness, fatigue, and mechanical hazards. At all events, various studies have shown high accident rates among child workers. In many cases, workmen's compensation is not available.

Third, children have been found more susceptible to industrial poisons than adult workers.

As results from the generally confining character of various types of child labor, certain specific sequelae are noted. Children are naturally more susceptible to tuberculosis, to which certain occupations may be a strong contributory factor. Industrial homework is particularly conducive to eyestrain, so fine is the nature of some of the work, such as sewing snaps on cards, stringing tags, setting stones. Lighting is also apt to be poor.

Agricultural work, frequently looked upon as healthful because the children are out in the sun and air, may prove disastrous, depending on the nature of the tasks to be performed. In tobacco picking, small children have to strain to reach the tallest leaves and taller children must stoop awkwardly to reach the lowest row of leaves. The work may be too heavy as in the case of bags carried by young cotton pickers. Studies of specific groups of child workers have shown the physical effects particularly in their bodily structure. Growth is asymmetrical. Many cases of winged scapulae have

been noticed. Heart and lungs do not keep pace with muscular growth.

The hours of work have been a bone of contention. Whether hours alone may represent health hazards is debatable, but account must be taken in any discussion of child labor of the length of time worked. Most investigations of hours deal with children employed full time. The hours of work in addition to those spent in regular or continuation school, however, may completely fill the waking time. Many states have passed laws regulating the hours a child may work, with special provisions and exemptions for some types of employment. Factory inspectors and representatives of the Children's Bureau or the National Child Labor Committee have found many violations of the law, apparently involving connivance of parents and employers. Results of surveys are not sufficiently inclusive to permit generalization. Evidence does abound, however, that many children are engaged in gainful employment for more than an eight-hour day and a forty-four- or forty-eight-hour week. Domestic and personal service claims longer hours than other occupations. No striking difference is apparent in the time worked

Table 69

HOURS WORKED BY CHILDREN IN SPECIFIED OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS IN DIFFERENT LOCALITIES

| | PER CENT WORKING SPECIFIED HOURS PER WEEK | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Place and Occupational Group* | *Under 44 hrs.* | *44 and under 48 hrs.* | *48 hrs.* | *48 and under 54 hrs.* | *54 hrs. and over* |
| New York City [a] | | | | | |
| Manufacturing | 44 | 52 [b] | | 4 | |
| Office | 79 | 21 [b] | | 1 | |
| General Messenger | 32 | 56 [b] | | 12 | |
| Chicago [c] | 21 | 61 | 14 | 2 | 1 |
| California [d] | 24 | 34 | 25 | 14 [e] | 3 [e] |
| Michigan [f] | 39 | 13 | 7 | 28 [e] | 12 [e] |
| Ohio [g] | 27 | 25 | 12 | 25 [e] | 10 [e] |

Table 69 (*continued*)

| *Place and Occupational Group* | *Under 44 hrs.* | *44 and under 48 hrs.* | *48 hrs.* | *48 and under 54 hrs.* | *54 hrs. and over* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rochester, New York [h] | | | | | |
| Manufacturing & Mechanical Trade | 7 | 66 | 7 | 17 | 1 |
| Boys | 17 | 13 | 7 | 29 | 33 |
| Girls | 15 | 7 | 1 | 68 | 10 |
| Clèrical | | | | | |
| Boys | 18 | 53 | 4 | 23 | 2 |
| Girls | 29 | 41 | 3 | 26 | 1 |
| Domestic (girls only) | 15 | 25 | 1 | 24 | 35 |
| Pennsylvania [i] | | | | | |
| Boot and Shoe Manufacturers | 2 | 26 | 4 | 56 [j] | 12 [j] |
| Clothing | 5 | 38 | 11 | 40 [j] | 6 [j] |
| Paper and printing | 10 | 52 | 13 | 21 [j] | 4 [j] |
| Textile | 2 | 19 | 11 | 61 [j] | 7 [j] |
| Metals | 7 | 33 | 13 | 38 [j] | 9 [j] |
| Hotels and Restaurants | 20 | 14 | 15 | 15 [j] | 37 [j] |

[a] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, vol. III-D, *Child Labor*, p. 81. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930. Includes 377 children under 16, New York City, 1924.

[b] Includes children working 45 to 48 hours per week inclusive.

[c] *Loc. cit.* Includes 1,517 continuation-school children under 16, Chicago, 1930.

[d] *Ibid.*, p. 82. Includes 1,837 children aged 16 and 17, 1,437 of whom were from San Francisco, 1930.

[e] Divisions were made at 56, instead of 54.

[f] *Loc. cit.* Includes 1,040 children aged 16 and 17, 1930.

[g] *Loc. cit.* Includes 2,555 children aged 16 and 17, 1930.

[h] *Ibid.*, p. 83. Includes 1,738 children aged sixteen, 1927.

[i] *Ibid.*, p. 80. Includes 19,042 children 14 and 15 years of age, 1926.

[j] Divisions were made at 52 rather than 54.

by boys and by girls. Some evidence regarding hours is given in Table 69, covering for the most part fully employed workers.

Most of these studies were made prior to the depression, when the industrial activity was more intense. Some alterations have occurred in the last decade. Employment of all persons has decreased

in varying degrees. During the period from 1933 to 1935 when the N.R.A. codes governing industries were in effect, children were dropped in large numbers. When the measure was declared unconstitutional, return to employment was noticeable. In ten states and 98 cities in other states, for example, 8,400 children were granted regular employment certificates between January 1 and June 1, 1936. This represented an increase of 150 per cent over the preceding year when the industrial codes were in force.[18]

Besides the possible ill effects on the physical health of the working children, there are various threats to mental health. Even though many of those leaving school for work have not made satisfactory adjustments in school and may be mentally inferior to those remaining, industry has little to offer them which will aid in the preparation for life, especially where no attention is paid to the special needs of the individual child. Excessive nervousness may be induced by the conditions under which many children labor, such as the competition, pressure, and noise under which they must perform their work. Fatigue also causes unrest, nervousness, and sometimes emotional conflicts. Some connection between delinquency and child labor has been mentioned, but there have been no studies demonstrating convincingly the relationships between the two. The bad results which may come from the influence under which children of street trades operate have led to attempts to protect them from immorality and vice.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* The economic position of child workers is far from strong. They are notoriously underpaid even though in numerous instances the work performed is equal to that of adult workers. From the manufacturer's point of view, the advantage of child labor rests in the lower wage cost. Children living at home do not present the same needs as adults, and no question is raised as to whether or not they may be making a living

[18] Noted in "The Case Against Child Labor," *Elementary School Journal*, 37 (1937), 413.

wage. They are part of a family group and their small contribution goes to increase the inadequate family income.

Wages paid to children vary from state to state and in different occupations. In nonagricultural pursuits, remuneration is somewhat higher than children can earn in the fields. Among 19,000 fourteen- and fifteen-year-old working children of Pennsylvania studied in 1926, the highest median weekly wage for any occupation was $10.17 in the clay, glass, and stone industry. The lowest was $6.34 for domestic and personal service.[14] The median weekly wages for children under sixteen in certain pursuits in New York City in 1924 ranged from $12 to $15. Boys received more than girls.[15] In Chicago, a similar sex differential was noticed. There the median earnings for boys in trade averaged as much as $13.08 per week, the highest for any group noted.[16] In the Southern states, lower wages prevail all along the line, with children at the foot of the scale. Fourteen- and fifteen-year-old textile workers of Georgia in 1928 averaged weekly from $5 to $8. However, some engaged in spinning and knitting made as much as $10 or $12 weekly. In Tennessee in 1928, weekly wages of children under sixteen ranged from $5 in the chewing-gum industry to $8 in the clothing industry. Girls engaged in paper, pulp, and fiber industries made $10 per week, and boys in the bottling industry averaged $12 per week.[17]

Part-time earnings are not only lower in the aggregate; they often represent smaller hourly rates. Newsboy sellers, not carriers, fondly referred to frequently as "little merchants," in 1935 showed median weekly earnings of $1.41. This represented a median of 15.6 hours per week. The older newsboys made greater profits in fewer hours. The median earnings of fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds were $1.82, as against $.82 for those under twelve. The median

[14] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 84.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 85.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

hours worked per week were respectively 15.4 and 17.8.[18] Industrial homework which represents another form of part-time employment is also poorly compensated. In New York in 1934, a study revealed wages of $1.50 to $5.00 per week for whole families.[19]

Most children working in agriculture do not receive a separate wage; the child's earnings are included with the father's. The wages may be based on piecework, e. g., strawberries picked at one and one-half cents per quart, or on daily rates, as a dollar a day for picking hops. Earnings vary so greatly and are frequently so irregular that data have proved difficult to assemble on any large scale. In the valley regions of the Northwestern states, a Children's Bureau investigator in 1926 found that children picking hops usually earned between $1 and $3 per day. Pear and peach pickers were paid higher wages, averaging as much as $3 and $4.[20] In tobacco-growing areas, geographical differentiation is noticeable. Children's Bureau studies have revealed that wages for various operations performed in and about tobacco fields in Kentucky ranged from 10 cents to $4 per day. Piecework was very unstandardized. In South Carolina, variations of from 15 cents to $1.25 per day were found, with the majority of children receiving about 50 cents. In Virginia, the range of pay was from 15 cents to $1.50 per day, and more than half of the children whose wages were studied received $1 per day. In the Connecticut Valley, wages were higher, varying from $1.50 to $3.00 per day.[21] These studies represent only small samples of children working at specific times. But they do indicate lack of standardization of wages and a predominance of lower rates.

Work performed by young children is rarely good training for

[18] *Children Engaged in Newspaper and Magazine Selling and Delivery* (U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 227 [1935]), p. 17.

[19] Lumpkin and Douglas, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[20] Alice Channing, *Child Labor in Fruit and Hop-Growing Districts of the Northern Pacific Coast* (U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 151 [1926]), p. 14.

[21] Harriet A. Byrnes, *Child Labor in Representative Tobacco-Growing Areas* (U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 155 [1926]), pp. 12–13, 25.

future jobs. Most occupations call for unskilled labor and are "blind alleys" leading a child nowhere. Cotton and berry picking, wrapping bundles, and performing repetitive tasks in a textile mill have no obvious values for future trade skills. There is questionable advantage in the business sense, alleged frequently to be attendant upon the street trades, despite evidence from stories of the Horatio Alger type. Work sequence is most apt to be from one unskilled job to another, with little accompanying increase in wages. Among agricultural workers, a repetition of the fate of the parents too frequently occurs. Thus, it cannot fairly be argued for the majority of child laborers that their work forms a good basis for future opportunities, except in industries which have a definite apprenticeship training.

As the subcommittee of the White House Conference reported in 1932: "The great mass of working children enter occupations that are monotonous in the extreme, lacking all educative content other than a certain amount of training in habits of work. What they must do can usually be learned in a few hours, or at best a few days; after that it is a matter of repeating the same tasks over and over again." [22]

While there is nothing to offer on the positive side, the negative side of the situation is even worse. Long hours of labor keep children from acquiring education which might prove beneficial. For some students, attendance at continuation schools is compulsory, but is not always helpful. Children carrying on both jobs and school must give divided attention to each. Frequently the education suffers. For those not attending any regular session, opportunities for social activities such as school provides are definitely lacking. The children need this informal educative process and the social contacts and adjustments which go with the school experience.

Most states have laws requiring a child to remain in school until

[22] White House Conference, *op. cit.*, p. 25. By permission of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930.

fourteen years of age. Some states also require permits for employment of children aged fifteen and sixteen. The number of such certificates issued tells the story of those who are dropping out of school for the purpose of seeking work or going to a job. On the other hand, in many states, children, particularly those engaged in seasonal farm occupations, absent themselves from school during the season when they are needed in the fields. In a previous chapter, we have spoken of the "cotton vacation" planned as a regular part of the school program in regions where the majority of pupils work in the fields with their families. Berry pickers and children of migratory laborers have their schooling curtailed so much each year that frequently little progress is made. The study previously referred to, of 251 migratory families in New Jersey in 1938, disclosed that an average of 39 school days per child had been lost owing to employment. The highest number of days lost by any one child was 120.[23] Reports of the length of school terms in different states show a definitely shorter term in Southern agricultural states where child labor in the fields is a common practice. Terms for rural schools range from 120 days in Georgia to 185 days in Connecticut.[24]

It is frequently alleged that those children leaving for work are dissatisfied with school and are not able to make sufficient progress in the prescribed curriculum to warrant their continuing, so that the loss of schooling is not itself a great handicap. A study in Cincinnati some years ago involved rather careful comparison of several hundred native white children who left school for work at the age of 14 with a control group of children who continued school. Both groups were restudied at the age of 18. The findings were that those who dropped out were inferior both mentally and physically. Similar results were derived from a Massachusetts study made

[23] "Migrant Child Workers in New Jersey," *Monthly Labor Review*, 48 (1939), 1074.

[24] Lumpkin and Douglas, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Table 70

CHILD LABOR AND LENGTH OF SCHOOL TERM, 1931–1932 [a]

| *States* | *Urban days* | *Rural days* | *Per Cent of Children Employed* [b] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Louisiana | 176 | 145 | 10.1 |
| North Carolina | 176 | 147 | 11.2 |
| Arkansas | 173 | 126 | 12.2 |
| Georgia | 178 | 120 | 14.7 |
| Alabama | 175 | 137 | 17.5 |
| South Carolina | 176 | 133 | 18.3 |
| Mississippi | 176 | 128 | 24.9 |
| New York | 183 | 175 | 1.6 |
| Pennsylvania | 186 | 173 | 2.0 |
| Massachusetts | 180 | 176 | 2.1 |
| New Jersey | 183 | 183 | 2.3 |
| Connecticut | 179 | 185 | 3.0 |
| Michigan | 181 | — | 1.2 |
| Minnesota | 181 | 178 | 1.9 |
| North Dakota | 179 | 164 | 2.7 |
| Colorado | 181 | 175 | 3.1 |

[a] Katharine Lumpkin and Dorothy Douglas, *Child Workers in America* (1937), p. 80. By permission of the authors.

[b] Represents per cent of total children aged 10 to 15 gainfully occupied, 1930.

about the same time.[25] Some observers have suggested that the schools had so little to offer these apparently inferior children that their potential loss is further minimized. But with the development in recent years of child-study departments, visiting teaching, vocational guidance, and more varied curricula, there is less support for

[25] Helen Thompson Wooley, *An Experimental Study of Children at Work and School Between the Ages of Fourteen and Eighteen Years* (1926); L. Thomas Hopkins, *The Intelligence of Continuation-School Children in Massachusetts* (1924).

this belief. Moreover, Lumpkin and Douglas remind us that the overwhelming majority of child laborers are from (economically) poor families whose financial circumstances probably hamper their physical and mental development as well as impel them to seek employment. They ask, "Why is it that stupid children of other classes don't go to work?" [26]

Enough has been said to show that economically and occupationally children who work do not have the same freedom of choice as those who are not forced by circumstances to labor. They are denied the opportunity of school participation as long as they may wish or can take advantage of it. The occupational choices are further limited through their lack of preparation for skilled employment. Finally, their low earnings restrict their social opportunities.

*Attitudes and Opinions Regarding Child Labor.* We have, we believe, made out a case for the proposition that the child laborers are definitely limited in group participation and in cultural activities. They are deprived of normal play outlets, whether they work full time or divide the day between work and school. Many are obliged to forego educational and training opportunities. Wages are meager and benefit the earner only indirectly through the family income. Conditions of work are far from desirable. Yet we must remember that since 1910 conditions have improved greatly as far as the lot of the child workers is concerned. Advocates of further restriction of child labor hold that, even if the number is diminishing, efforts should continue so long as any children are still being forced to labor.

The feeling that child labor is, on the whole, harmful is not shared by the population as a whole. Many insist that the wholesale exploitation of children in the mills, which first drew the attention of the reformers, has ceased. There are those who condone the employment of children in general on the ground that it de-

[26] Lumpkin and Douglas, *op. cit.*, chap. 8, pp. 117–39.

velops habits of thrift and lays patterns for profitable future behavior. A child with too much leisure develops habits of idleness and may become involved in serious mischief and delinquency. Many parents of working children believe this as firmly as do those who stand to profit from continuing child labor in factories, homes, and fields. Back in 1907, when the hue and cry against exploitation of children especially centered on those in Southern textile mills, one investigator for the Federal Government felt that the children working in mills were far better off than many living on the land in squalid and unsanitary homes, eking out a bare subsistence from the soil or selling "moonshine," with no educational provisions and no habits of regular work and wages established. Many of the mills visited provided some instruction for the workers. Some provided housing that was a definite improvement over the rude cabins of hill farmers. In general, the cotton-mill folk gave the impression of better health and prosperity than did their friends and relatives who stayed in the hills. This investigator felt the hazards of child labor had been greatly overrated and that evidence on the opposite side was deliberately withheld from the public. Thus he summarized his findings:

> My thoughts constantly reverted to those poor people in the mountains whose only chances for betterment are the opportunities opened up to them by the manufacturing industries that may give them employment. . . . I could recall the pleadings of those who had tasted of the benefits accrued from light employment in a cotton mill, pleading to be allowed to return to the mill from which they had been legislated by the preachings of those well-meaning reformers. . . .[27]

This attitude was again found in 1916 in hearings before Congress regarding the Child Labor Act then under consideration. Said a textile manufacturer from the South, "If you discharge the children at the mills . . . under 16 years of age, and let them loaf

[27] Thomas R. Dawley, Jr., *The Child That Toileth Not* (1912), p. ix.

around on the streets . . . the morals of the children are going to be corrupted . . . for the good of the children and for the good of the people we ask you to be kind enough to leave us alone." [28]

The value of work for children was lauded again by Mr. Bernarr Macfadden, editor of *Liberty*, when he said in the issue of January 27, 1934, "We will find in some families that there are boys of 14 and 15 years of age who are the sole support of widowed mothers. They are growing into self-reliant, strong, capable citizens because of the character-building influence of the responsibilities they are assuming." [29]

This feeling that children are deprived of opportunities by not being allowed to work, and lose the advantages of early labor which formed the characters of the great businessmen of our time, is the theme of an article in *The Saturday Evening Post*, entitled "Horatio Alger at the Bridge." The author summarizes interviews with Mr. Benjamin Franklin Affleck, President of the Universal Atlas Cement Company, James H. Hustis, onetime President of the Boston and Maine and the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroads, Frederick H. Ecker, President of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, and several others—all of whom had gone to work before the age of sixteen in a variety of capacities, and attributed their success in part to the habits of hard work thus acquired. "Does it not seem to be an abundance of experience tending to prove that the surest prescription for starting an American boy toward outstanding success is to let him go to work before he is fully grown?" [30]

*Programs of Action.* The attack on the inequalities of opportunity for employed children has been made from many sides. But most

[28] U. S. Congress, *Hearings before the Committee on Labor, on the Child Labor Bill* (1916), p. 34.

[29] Bernarr Macfadden, "Why Kill the Child Labor Amendment," *Liberty*, Jan. 27, 1934. By permission of the editor in chief.

[30] Boyden Sparks, "Horatio Alger at the Bridge," *The Saturday Evening Post*, 208 (1936), 74. By permission of the editors.

important seem to have been the indirect influences. As the years have gone by, education has been assuming a more and more important role throughout the whole country. Enrollments have grown, noticeably in the higher grades. The advantages of this formal learning period have become so fully accepted in our culture that states have laws requiring a minimum amount of schooling. These have served to eliminate many of the very early withdrawals, although there are still many who go to work as soon as opportunity offers. Scarcity of jobs for children during the depression has been another factor in the reduction of child labor. Under the present Social Security program, the National Youth Administration has made it possible for large numbers who do not wish to leave school for work to stay on a few more years. These measures help to secure for the children of the poorer classes the same advantage as the normally nonworking children enjoy. But, of course, not all children are able to avail themselves of this help.

A more direct force is seen in the state laws regulating child labor. These have taken the form of minimum educational requirements, minimum age limits below which a child must not work, certain standards of physical health for children seeking employment certificates. Additional restrictions are placed on the more dangerous occupations, those in which accident rates are high and conditions of employment are generally hazardous. Hours of work in specified occupations have been prescribed, and nightwork for girls has been largely eliminated. The laws exhibit wide variations among the states as to the amount of protection afforded and the effectiveness of the provisions for enforcing the laws. Investigations of hours of employment and the ages of working children and the checking of employment certificates have shown that violations on almost all counts are widespread. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that great headway has been made toward controlling the situation.

In factories, all but two states have a minimum age provision of

fourteen years. Some states have a higher age minimum for certain occupations, but usually many exemptions are permitted. In the District of Columbia and in thirty-seven states, an eight-hour day for work in factories and some other employments is provided for. A forty-eight- or a forty-four-hour week is almost universally prescribed. But many occupations lie wholly outside such provisions, for agricultural labor and other seasonal work are common. Today, the greatest abuses of child labor are found in these fields. Night-work has been prohibited under specified conditions in the effort to protect the children from moral dangers. Physical conditions of the workplace have been regulated, and some means of redress for accidents sustained have been provided.

Federal efforts to regulate child labor have not been successful. The first Federal act, passed in 1916, attempted to get at the root of the evil by prohibiting the shipment in interstate and foreign commerce of goods produced by children under sixteen in certain industries, and under fourteen in other specified industries. The United States Supreme Court in a test case declared this unconstitutional in 1918. Then, in that same year, another law was passed, included in the Revenue Act of 1919, to impose a tax on the profits of mines and manufacturing establishments employing children in violation of the same restrictions set forth in the previous act. This was declared unconstitutional in 1922.

Recent efforts have been centered on passing a constitutional amendment, proposed in 1924, whereby the national legislature shall have the power, concurrent with that of the states, "to limit, regulate and prohibit the labor of persons under 18 years of age" (Section 1). To date, twenty-eight states have ratified the amendment, but action from eight more states is necessary before the amendment goes into effect.[31] Bitter opposition has been directed

[31] These states have ratified the amendment in approximately this order: Arkansas, Arizona, California, Wisconsin, Montana, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio,

against the proposal. It has been claimed that states' rights would be infringed, that the home would be invaded by the national government, and that the church was menaced. Opponents have not been confined to manufacturers, traditionally opposed to regulations, but have been found in religious organizations, patriotic groups, and among prominent educators as Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia, and President Emeritus A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard. The future of the amendment is problematical. It will be noted that some highly industrialized states as New York and Massachusetts have not yet ratified the measure. The National Child Labor Committee is still active and simultaneously is pushing better state legislation and enforcement of existing laws.

Certain regulations regarding working hours of children have been written into the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. These serve to protect children employed in establishments producing goods for inter-state commerce. Children working at occupations where only local business is involved, child actors, and agricultural workers are not covered by its provisions. Sixteen years has been set as the minimum age for those covered by the Act, although employment under restricted conditions is possible for children between 14 and 16. Sixteen and 17 year old youngsters are further excluded from certain hazardous and detrimental occupations. These child-labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act are administered by the Federal Children's Bureau.

To summarize, child labor is still the object of controversy; it is declining in extent; where it exists, it is an obstacle to social participation. But further research is needed if we are to learn how much and in what ways specific types of juvenile employment curtail the group life and cultural activities of those so occupied.

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Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, West Virginia, Idaho, Indiana, Utah, Wyoming, Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, and New Mexico.

## Suggested Readings

Abbott, Grace, *The Child and the State.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938. Vol. I, secs. II–VI. Contains a summary of various aspects of child labor, with excerpts from published studies. Gives a good general picture of the many phases of the problem.

Dinwiddie, Courtenay, "The Present Status of Child Labor," *Social Service Review,* 13 (1939), 431–9. Summarizes effects of Wages and Hours Act, conditions of child labor in certain industries, and status of the proposed constitutional amendment.

Fuller, Raymond G., *Child Labor and the Constitution.* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1923. Good historical account, stressing the legal and constitutional aspects.

Fuller, Raymond G., *Fourteen is Too Early.* New York: National Child Labor Committee, 1927. Discusses psychological effects of school leaving and child labor.

Lumpkin, Katharine Du Pre, and Douglas, Dorothy Wolff, *Child Workers of America.* New York: Robert M. McBride and Company, 1937. Contains recent material on actual child labor, with many case stories. Also discusses related problems of health, reasons for working, legislation.

National Child Labor Committee. Numerous special reports on studies of child labor in specific areas.

United States Children's Bureau Publications. A number of special reports by field investigators of wages, hours of labor, conditions of labor of children in various industries and occupations.

White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *Child Labor,* vol. III-D. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1932. Contains comprehensive reports by a series of committees on extent of child labor, physical effects, earnings and hours of work, legislative and protective measures.

## Projects for Further Study

1. From the United States Census, transcribe by states the percentages of children at work, percentages in various age groups attending school, and percentages of illiterates. Put the data in parallel columns. Compute rank correlations between the three series. Make col-

ored maps showing the relative incidence of child labor, school attendance, and illiteracy. What conclusions may be drawn from these displays?

2. Secure the life histories of two men who left school early and went to work, one of whom has made a success in some business or trade or in politics, the other having never escaped the handicaps associated with his limited schooling and premature employment.

3. Inquire in the local community how children aged 10 to 16 spend their out-of-school hours—e. g., unsupervised play, organized recreation, home chores, regular employment, odd jobs, music lessons, and so on. If the co-operation of the school board can be enlisted, compare the age-grade placement and the scholarship record of (*a*) children working regularly outside of school hours, (*b*) children with directed leisure-time activities, but no employment, and (*c*) children who neither work nor have supervised play.

4. Secure copies of state laws pertaining to child labor. Get in touch with the enforcing and reporting agencies; ask for information concerning the number of work permits granted in a given period of time, age, sex, and grades attained by children who apply for permits, reasons given for wanting to leave school, number who attend continuation schools, industries involved and types of jobs secured, wages received.

5. With the co-operation of Y.M.C.A., a social settlement, or some other agency, arrange to give Chapin's "Social Participation Scale" to adolescents who are working and to a control group of those who are continuing in school.

6. With the aid of *Reader's Guide*, review the literature involved in the child-labor controversy. Note arguments, manner of presentation, affiliations of authors and participating groups. What evidence is presented concerning the social participation of child laborers?

7. Arrange an interview with a high-school vocational counselor, the director of a junior employment service, or a representative of the National Child Labor Committee to discuss advantages and disadvantages of an early start in the business world.

# *Chapter 22*

# GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

THE inclusion of a chapter on the gainful employment of women affords an opportunity to restate and emphasize the chief objective of this book. It is to examine various conditions and events which are commonly regarded as social handicaps, to assemble available evidence which may enable us to decide more accurately whether these factors really do restrict social participation, and, if so, how much. For the purpose in hand, we are not at all concerned with moral condemnation, and only incidentally with control. In the present chapter, we shall not present the gainful employment of women as either good or bad. But we shall ask whether it restricts women's group memberships and cultural activities and whether it involves substituting one type of social participation for another. Because most of the data we should like to use are not available, we shall employ indirect evidence and indicate what steps must be taken before we can find a satisfactory answer to our questions.

In every age in every land, most women have worked. Commonly they have worked hard. Their status in various cultures shows no consistent relation to their specific economic activities. But in any given culture, their social status seems to bear a direct relation to the importance attached *in that culture* to the work regarded as distinctively women's. Thus, among the Todas of South India, women have nothing to do with dairying which is the most important industry and is also associated with Toda religion. It is not surprising that the status of Toda women is low. In any culture, men and women are expected to do only the kinds of work

traditionally assigned to their sex. When the group is relatively isolated and changes are infrequent, it appears that few persons violate the mores and there are few problems pertaining to women's (or men's) work. But in our country, modern means of transportation and communication have almost destroyed cultural isolation, and a rapid flow of new inventions is constantly presenting new problems of the division of labor. Until recently in our country, women's work was performed chiefly in and about the home. It included not merely housekeeping and child rearing, but also helping on farms, in stores, and in other family businesses. Since the Industrial Revolution, increasing numbers of women have been employed as individuals outside their homes. They have taken jobs in factories, stores, and offices, earning separate wages. For an even longer time, they have gone out as domestic servants. More recently, they have become teachers, nurses, and social workers. So it has come to pass that the term "gainful workers . . . does not include women doing housework in their own homes, without wages, and having no other employment," [1] but refers only to those employed outside their own homes or those who receive wages for work done at home.

We have seen in previous chapters that Mrs. Morris went to work as a housekeeper during the depression when her husband could not find work. Alice Schmidt held a clerical position. Edna Green supported her family after her husband's illness prevented him from working. The two unmarried mothers described in Chapter 18 were both employed. All of these women were working for financial reasons. They had to support themselves. Most of them had dependents. Their employment history is similar to that of many other workingwomen. Some are responsible merely for their own support, some contribute to a family income, some are the only wage earners in their households. Some undertake not merely to earn a living, but also to keep house and care for children, thus bearing a double burden.

[1] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 4, p. 1.

At first, it was factories that drew women from their homes. Gradually a variety of tasks was opened to them.

In the days when business, trade and the genteel professions (with the exception of teaching) still remained closed to women, industry welcomed them to the factory. Nearly a century ago the "females" of Fall River were offered "honorable employment and generous remuneration" by the New England cotton manufacturers, and many young ladies of good family were more than happy to accept, since they were assured, along with the "generous remuneration" careful chaperonage, and respectable working conditions. In 1878, Emma Nutt became the first "hello girl" when engaged as an operator by the New Haven Telephone Company. With the invention of the typewriter, the bars came down with a crash. Thereafter women surged into business and industry in ever increasing numbers. Today it is admitted that they hold practically a monopoly of all office jobs including major and junior executive posts. In industry they are sought in preference to men for certain operations requiring small hands and delicate manual dexterity.[2]

In the past and even in the present, many factory employees have worked long hours for little pay. So-called sweatshops have been common. Not all women factory employees are overworked and underpaid, but many have a real struggle for existence. The following excerpts from letters of factory workers give some idea of their attitudes.

**Two Letters Regarding Wage Rates During the Depression in the Clothing Industry**

I am working in ——— at ———. We have to be in at 7 A. M. work to 12 then 1 to 5 o'clock. . . . They also refuse to tell you the prices. When you receive your slip you are mark $2.75 for five days and a half. Some received $1.78, some $.95. You never see your working slip. . . . I have read a piece in the ——— Advertiser. To write you

[2] "They Follow Their Work to Factory and Office," *Women at Work* (1939), p. 83. By permission of the Central Committee assembled by the American Woman's Association.

in person. I hope you be able to help the working girls in this place.[3]

We were getting $15 a week for a salary and got along very well, the firm took off $2 making $13 well a half loaf is better than nothing. But they had the audacity to reduce us again 10 percent from the $13 making our pay $11.70 . . . we have to pay for all holidays so you see we have not even $11.70 a week. The very least you can get board is $8, some have to pay carfare, when it is stormy you must pay two . . . if you only add up what I and many others do live on, not even the price of shoes, you may think it is exaggerated, no it is the gospel truth, and I don't hesitate to tell you it is. . . .[4]

### A Silk Weaver in a Southern Town Wrote Concerning Attending a Summer School for Industrial Workers

Yes, I am interested, but I find I cannot go again this summer. This has been such a hard year that I have gradually eaten into my little savings until they are all gone. . . . I am back in the mill now. The best I can do running four looms is about $12 [she formerly made $18] a week. That looks mighty big to me, though. It seems like we need something more than education now. None of our workers are satisfied, but what are we to do? After loafing for ten months most of us are glad of $10 a week and there are regular rayon weavers from North Carolina ready to take our jobs any day. Sometimes I am almost glad that Mama hasn't had to go through this past winter. I know she wouldn't have gone hungry, but there are other things. I haven't gone hungry either. But worry just saps one's strength, disposition and everything.[5]

### The Married Woman Worker Speaks

Marriage develops a woman physically, socially, spiritually and intellectually—making her better equipped to handle her job. It increases her sympathies. When my husband and I contemplated marriage it was our desire to have a real home and children. Shortly before we were married my husband temporarily lost his eyesight. At the time he offered me

[3] Frances Perkins, "The Cost of a Five-Dollar Dress," *Survey Graphic*, 22 (1933), 75. By permission of the editor.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 77. By permission of the editor.

[5] Helen Hill, "Cross Section of Hard Times," *Survey*, 66 (1931), 465. By permission of the editor.

release from our engagement, but I felt that could not be—that come what might we would fight it together. He did not want me to work but I was a trained teacher and could get a fair salary and so we were married. I secured a position (shortly after the close of my contract) in the city in which he was living, and I am still at it after 28 years. There are several angles to the situation. I have never regretted our marriage and I am most thankful that I have been able to work and either wholly or in part support my husband and myself.

In addition to my husband I have also helped support his mother and to provide care for her in our own home for nearly seven years of invalidism. Also for my mother after she became an invalid for nearly three years. I also cared for and educated through high school a niece left motherless for over five years. I know that I have not neglected my work as teacher during that time. I have had unusually good health and marvelous endurance. My husband has been partially blind most of the 28 years and was totally blind for two years. At present he sees with aid of lenses—but less than 25 per cent.[6]

There is so little to do in a little home these days with all the conveniences one has that it seems such a useless existence to do nothing but social duties. Why should a man support me just because I am married? Homemaking and gainful employment may exist for a woman before marriage. I lived with another teacher, as hundreds of teachers do, in an apartment. We did our own work—cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing. We went out on an average of four nights a week. We had to adjust ourselves to each other even though there was no bond between us. We gave no one of lesser opportunity a chance to earn anything since we did our own work. Why, then, do people say, "How can you teach and manage a home?" I taught and managed one under much less favorable conditions prior to marriage. Now I come home to love and understanding—to a little home on which we pay $200 a year taxes—to permanency and peace, and I feel that I am a happier and better teacher. Since it is now an economic necessity that I teach, or else decidedly lower my standard of living, I cannot see why five men on a school board should tell me that because I am a *woman* I cannot earn

[6] Cecile T. La Follette, *A Study of the Problems of 652 Gainfully Employed Married Homemakers* (Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 619 [1934]), p. 165. By permission of Teachers College Bureau of Publications.

my own living. Why do doctors not retire after 10 or 12 years of practice, on the grounds that they are keeping a young graduate doctor from practicing? Had I not married I should still be teaching, so am I really keeping someone from a position? [7]

### A Working Mother

Abbie Carter had always worked. Brought up on a cotton plantation with her many brothers and sisters, she had worked in the fields. When she was fifteen, she went into the city and through relatives secured a housework position. She had a succession of such jobs, for she was very "green" on her first attempt. After a few years, she married, but Joe didn't make much. There weren't many opportunities for colored persons except in laboring occupations, and Joe was somewhat easygoing and lazy. So Abbie kept on working, taking time out for the children. The needs of the family increased as the family grew, the depression came, and Joe didn't prove any more adequate to provide for a large family than a smaller one. Abbie nagged at him a good deal and threw up to him the fact that she was having to carry the burdens of the family, five children now, the oldest thirteen. Finally, Joe drifted away, but Abbie really felt more relieved than otherwise. She had for some time been working out by the day, for she made more money in this way even though the work was harder. So many housework positions required women who could live on the place, and Abbie knew she couldn't do that with her children to plan for. Economically she didn't do so badly this way, and one of the boys, aged eleven, picked up a little each week at odd jobs.

But it was her relationship to the children which bothered Abbie. She was so tired at night that she would snap at them, and they were saucy and disrespectful. Agnes, aged thirteen, was supposed to look after the younger children, but she was getting so she would hang around with a gang of others and not come home. Sometimes Abbie, when she worked near by, would run home and find the little ones locked out and Agnes nowhere around. Moreover Agnes did not tell her mother anything, and she was afraid she might get into trouble running around the way she did. Little Joe had stolen some fruit from the corner grocery once, but the owner had not prosecuted. Try as she might, Abbie could not

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 161. By permission of Teachers College Bureau of Publications.

work out any satisfactory arrangements for her children. They could barely live on the $10–$12 she made. The children wanted more than she could give them. They were growing away from her, too.

These represent only a few situations, but bring out many of the difficulties and problems encountered by workingwomen. Their need for jobs to support dependent children and relatives is shown. The struggles of those who are both wage earner and homemaker vary according to the nature of adjustments made. The young girl in the very low-paid industries tries to live on her meager earnings, afraid to make any protest, lest she lose even that little security, when so many others are ready to take her place. On the other hand, working proves stimulating to many. Some married women claim they don't have enough to do at home, and that satisfactory home life makes for better performance on the job. At the same time, many raise the old issue of women's status, insisting that married women should not work.

*Numbers of Employed Women.* In our statistics of workingwomen, we are including only those "gainfully employed," as defined by the United States Census. In addition, there are large

Table 71

PER CENT OF POPULATION TEN YEARS OLD AND OVER GAINFULLY EMPLOYED, 1870–1930[a]

| *Year* | *Female* | *Male* |
|---|---|---|
| 1870 | 13.1 | 74.8 |
| 1880 | 14.7 | 78.7 |
| 1890 | 17.4 | 79.3 |
| 1900 | 18.8 | 80.0 |
| 1910 | 23.4 | 81.3 |
| 1920 | 21.1 | 78.2 |
| 1930 | 22.0 | 76.2 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population,* vol. 4, p. 6.

numbers of women who work with their husbands in agriculture, contributing to a family income. Nor do these figures include women working in the home, without remuneration. In 1930, when the last census was taken, 10,752,116 women were listed as gainfully employed. This represented an increase of 26 per cent over the 1920 total. In percentage of the female population ten years of age and over, the increase over 1920 was less pronounced. As a matter of fact, the percentages employed in both 1920 and 1930 were lower than in 1910. From 1870 to 1910, each decade showed an increase in the percentage of women working for a living. During this period, more and more fields have become open for women, and they have seemed to embrace eagerly the opportunities to leave home and become wage earners.

The occupations in which women engage are many and varied. Scarcely a field may be found in which at least one woman has not tried her hand, and women sometimes excel in unusual vocations.

Table 72

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED WOMEN WORKERS TEN YEARS OF AGE OR OVER, CLASSIFIED BY GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL DIVISIONS [a]

| *Occupational Division* | *1930* | *1920* |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Agriculture | 8.5 | 12.7 |
| Manufacturing and mechanical industries | 17.5 | 22.6 |
| Transportation and communication | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Trade | 9.0 | 7.9 |
| Public service (not elsewhere classified) | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Professional service | 14.2 | 11.9 |
| Clerical occupations | 18.5 | 16.6 |
| Domestic and personal service | 29.6 | 25.6 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 4, p. 6.

There are certain areas which women seem virtually to have taken over. Table 72 indicates the percentage distribution of employed women according to general occupational classifications. The largest percentage of workers is found in domestic and personal service, long woman's prerogatives. It has been augmented in recent years by new types of personal service such as hairdressing. Clerical workers are second in importance, accounting for 18.5 per cent of all gainfully employed females. Closely following are the factory workers. The professions account for another significant group, though a small percentage. The other occupations of women are scattered. Specific fields, as distinguished from general occupations, in which large numbers of women were found working in 1930 include the clothing industry, textile mills, telephone operation, selling, bookkeeping and stenography, restaurant work, nursing, and teaching. Except for the professions, few of the occupations employing large numbers of women require a great deal of skill. Once the techniques for the specific job have been learned, the work becomes somewhat repetitious.

Women are most apt to work between the ages of 18 and 30. The proportion of those who are working during those years is higher than for other age periods. The greatest actual numbers of workers, however, are found between the ages of 20 and 40. (See Table 73). These facts, together with more intimate knowledge of some specific instances, have led to two popular beliefs: that women work primarily for pin money, and that older women have a hard time obtaining or keeping employment.

The decade 1920 to 1930 has shown some shift in principal types of employment. Fewer women were engaged in paid agricultural work in 1930, more in personal service, professions, and clerical occupations. A marked decline was evident in the percentage of women in factories, which held second place in 1920. This may be partly explained by the general technological displacement of workers and the onset of the depression, in part by the opening of other fields to

Table 73

## AGE OF GAINFULLY EMPLOYED WOMEN WORKERS 1930 [a]

| *Age* | *Number* | *Per Cent of Female Population of Same Age* |
|---|---|---|
| 10–13 | 73,068 | 1.5 |
| 14 | 46,821 | 4.0 |
| 15 | 86,487 | 7.6 |
| 16 | 201,306 | 17.0 |
| 17 | 313,041 | 27.5 |
| 18 and 19 | 942,445 | 40.5 |
| 20–24 | 2,347,548 | 42.4 |
| 25–29 | 1,541,411 | 31.0 |
| 30–34 | 1,112,927 | 24.4 |
| 35–39 | 1,047,601 | 23.1 |
| 40–44 | 844,737 | 21.9 |
| 45–49 | 706,976 | 21.0 |
| 50–54 | 559,050 | 19.7 |
| 55–59 | 383,293 | 17.3 |
| 60–64 | 265,785 | 14.7 |
| 65–69 | 154,142 | 11.4 |
| 70–74 | 72,669 | 7.6 |
| 75 and over | 39,407 | 4.0 |
| Unknown | 13,402 | 31.8 |

[a] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 4, p. 40.

women. Domestic and personal service has always been assigned to women for the most part, but the large increase noted may be ascribed in part to the changes in our culture, involving a greater demand for services in beauty shops, restaurants, hotels, and apartment houses.

In contrast to these large numbers of our girls and women who are daily working for a wage, there remain some 38 million, 10 years of age and over, who are not so occupied. The majority of these, 24½ million, 16 years and over, are classified as homemakers.

Although most of them are married women, many single girls keeping house for their fathers, brothers, or other relatives are so classified. The remainder of females between the ages of 10 and 16 are at home, or still going to school, but not in the labor market.[8]

The depression with its attendant unemployment did not leave women unscathed. When the 1930 census of unemployment was taken, 3.4 per cent were noted as usually gainfully employed, but desiring and looking for work, and an additional 1.2 per cent were in the class of those temporarily unemployed. These figures were smaller than those for the men at the same time.[9] A government study in January, 1931, of nineteen large cities in the United States showed 26.2 per cent of men normally employed to be out of work and but 18.9 per cent of women.[10] Thus, the women were somewhat better off than the men. But the incidence of unemployment varied from trade to trade, being highest in personal service and selling. The low point of the depression as far as employment is concerned was 1932. Since then, a slightly upward trend has been apparent for men and women alike. A study of employment changes for women during the depression, in states largely industrial, shows this upward trend. Women also seem to have been employed in slightly larger proportions in the upward sweep than men, with the exception of the textile and food groups where women have previously been employed in large numbers.[11]

*Why Women Work Outside the Home.* The asking of such a question as "Why do women work?" may involve any one of several assumptions. It may come from certain middle- and upper-class people whose womenfolk are "protected," family ornaments, sym-

[8] Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, *Women in the Economy of the United States of America* (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin No. 155 [1937]), p. 27.

[9] Fifteenth Census, *Unemployment*, vol. 1, p. 6.

[10] Pidgeon, *op. cit.*, p. 36–7.

[11] Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, *Trends in the Employment of Women, 1928–36* (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin No. 159 [1938]), p. 3.

bols of the economic achievements of husbands and fathers. Or it may come from people who are accustomed to seeing women engage in useful work at home without wages. Instead of the "clinging-vine" stereotype, their point of reference is "Woman's place is in the home." The most important question behind all these assumptions is: "How have the folkways and mores come to change in regard to women's economic roles?" To answer this in full would involve the whole story of the Industrial Revolution and the growth of cities. Perhaps it is sufficient for our purpose to remind the reader that industrialization has meant the provision of job opportunities outside the home, opportunities which previously did not exist. In fact, it has meant what the economists call a "demand" for women's labor in factories and shops, and later in stores and offices. Urbanization has meant living in small quarters where necessary housekeeping is limited; and usually with no garden, no domestic animals, and often no yard or furnace to tend. For city girls and women, there is little of the homework that occupies those who live on farms. Other factors which have influenced the gainful employment of women are the low wages of many men, and the consequent urge to supplement their earnings. Some women have sought pin money, some have tried to raise the family's level of living, and many have worked to secure the bare necessities of life. We shall present some concrete data in order to show the operation of some of these forces in contemporary America.

Slightly more than half of the gainfully occupied women reported in the 1930 census were single; 29 per cent of them were married, and 17 per cent were widowed or divorced.[12] The married women were employed mainly in domestic and personal service, to a lesser extent in manufacturing and clerical occupations. Hence, one writer feels they must have been motivated in seeking employment by need within the family.

[12] Fifteenth Census, *Population*, vol. 4, p. 68.

Since almost two-thirds of the gainfully occupied [married] women were found in manufacturing and mechanical industries, domestic and personal service, and agriculture—types of work in which women have almost no opportunity for a career—it would appear that the chief reason they have sought such employment lies in the demands of economic necessity.[13]

Studies of married workingwomen reinforce this point of view, as in most instances the family situation is such that the members could not get along without the mother's wages. Gwendolyn Hughes Berry, studying 728 mothers who were working in industrial establishments of Philadelphia, received the following answers to her question as to reasons for working after marriage: [14]

| | *Per Cent* |
|---|---|
| "My husband wasn't making enough." | 29 |
| "My husband was dead." | 22 |
| "My husband was sick." | 14 |
| "He left me." | 13 |
| "He couldn't support me." | 11 |
| "I'd rather work." | 11 |

The Industrial Department of the Y.W.C.A. interviewed 519 married women workers as to their reasons for working, and 232 stated their family income was insufficient.[15] On a higher economic level, a survey of 568 married college alumnae indicated that 58.8 per cent worked because of economic necessity.[16] A recent investiga-

[13] Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, *Women in Industry* (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin No. 164 [1938]), p. 17.

[14] Gwendolyn Hughes Berry, "Mothers in Industry," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 143, no. 232 (1929), p. 317. By permission of the editor.

[15] Eleanor Coit and Elsie Harper, "Why Do Married Women Work?" *Survey*, 64 (1930), 79.

[16] Chase Going Woodhouse, "Married College Women in Business and the Professions," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 143 (1929), 329.

tion of the problems of 652 gainfully employed married women homemakers showed that 67 per cent or 438 of them claimed family need as a reason for working.[17]

Not only married women but other workers of their sex report economic need as a motivating force. Many point out that they are supporting children, parents, brothers, sisters, or other relatives. According to an analysis by the Women's Bureau of 3,331,386 employed women homemakers reported in the 1930 census, 13.7 per cent were the sole support of family groups. A review of findings of ten studies covering 369,725 women working showed an average of 12.7 per cent who were the sole support of their family units.[18] This situation seemed to be quite common, regardless of the nature of the work, whether industrial, domestic, or professional. The National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs made a study of its own members. It found that the women who were the sole support of their households had an average of 1.5 dependents with whom they lived and 2.1 dependents whom they were partially supporting. Only three per cent of the more than 12,000 women responding might be said to be earning pin money, for they had no dependents and were living in households to which they did not contribute.[19]

Among 680 employed workers studied by the National Board of the Y.W.C.A., 450 had other persons wholly or partially dependent upon them. They reported an average of 2.2 dependents per person.[20] This same number of dependents was found among domestic women workers on relief in New York City in 1935. In 1933, the members of the American Women's Association claimed an average of 2.4 dependents per member. Pennsylvania women

[17] La Follette, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

[18] Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, *Women in the Economy of the United States* (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin No. 155 [1937]), p. 80.

[19] Beulah Amidon, "Women Breadwinners—They Don't Work for Pin Money," *Survey Graphic*, 27 (1938), 151–2.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 152.

C.W.A. workers in 1933–1934 supported 1.3 dependents per person.[21] Women are not therefore as footloose and fancy-free as some might have us think. Many of these women supporting dependents are classified as heads of families and many more are members of groups in which there is no male wage earner. Naturally one might expect that many among the divorced and widowed group must assume the dual role of wage earner and homemaker. But many single women and some married women whose husbands may be ill or irresponsible bear sole responsibility for support of the remaining members. The proportion of such women is higher among underprivileged families. Practically all women employed by the Works Progress Administration are so classified.

Dependents are more likely to be of the preceding generation than of the following. Women often assume the support of parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. The Business and Professional Women's Club study, previously referred to, found that 55 per cent of the dependents supported were of the past generation, as against 20 per cent of the women's own generation and 25 per cent of the following. Among the Y.W.C.A. members, 52 per cent of the dependents were parents, grandparents, and the like.[22] With the increasing disbursement of old-age-assistance benefits, this situation may change.

*Family Relationships of Women Workers.* The data cited in the preceding section indicate that most women workers are members of family groups for which they assume considerable financial responsibility. In fact, the majority of the married women studied are working because their contribution is necessary to family support. This means that women in low-paid employment are having to perform household tasks before and after their work in shop or factory. An additional strain is thus put upon the wife and mother,

[21] Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, *Women in the Economy of the United States* (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin No. 155 [1937]), p. 83.

[22] Amidon, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

so that she may have too little energy for her husband and children after the day's work and the household tasks have been performed. Studies of working mothers have disclosed that many children are neglected because of the impossibility of the mother's meeting all the demands on her time and energy. They have inadequate supervision and often exhibit behavior difficulties. Perhaps more important still, a woman may grow away from children and husband because of her continued absence and the physical fatigue and nervousness due to her struggle. Again evidence would seem to point to greatest strains in the families of low income. On higher economic levels, adjustments of workingwomen to their homes seem to be more satisfactorily achieved. Out of the 514 women reporting to Miss La Follette in her study of married women workers, 411 maintained that they felt a happier companionship with their husbands as a result of their work. About one fifth, however, said their husbands were opposed to their working. More than half stated that, despite satisfactory arrangements, they felt they neglected their husbands in some ways owing to the twofold job.[23]

Another social handicap frequently encountered is the hostility of those who insist that married women should not have jobs, particularly if their husbands are employed. This attitude is, as we have seen, in part a heritage from days when few women worked away from home. In part it is a product of depression hysteria. A hue and cry is constantly raised against the married schoolteacher and the office worker whose husband is employed. Some school systems have refused to employ married women as teachers. The reaction to such stringent regulations is often to put off marrying, or marry and keep the matter a secret, or even to form unions without benefit of matrimony. Less opposition has been directed toward single women who may not have any economic need. Some studies have indicated that married women's work may be more irregular than that of unmarried women because of home responsibilities. But

[23] La Follette, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

some employers feel that married women and mothers are more stable and responsible workers because of their need for the job.

The limitations to participation in family life seem to fall more heavily upon the married woman worker than upon her unmarried sister. However, single women with dependents do have a double duty to perform in many cases. Where earnings are needed badly and the household duties are numerous, a woman who works is handicapped by the limited time and energy which she has for sharing in family life, growing up with her children, and for contacts outside the home. In families of higher economic standing, where household cares may not fall so heavily upon the woman, no barrier to family relationships and outside contacts need exist. In fact, the experiences of working and participating in other groups may broaden a woman's perspective and make her a more understanding wife and mother. Some women remaining in a home all day seem to have as little reserve left for their families as those who work. To others, housework is definitely irritating, and they seem to be unable to perform their tasks very adequately. As someone has put it, some women naturally are better breadwinners than breadmakers.

So far nothing has been said about husbands who regard their wives' employment as a reflection on their own competence, or the children who feel deprived of their mothers' attention. We have no data concerning the frequency of such reactions, but we know from observation that they are by no means unusual. We also know that employment of a wife and mother is often the subject of domestic discord, but we are unable at present to estimate the importance of this factor. There are likely to be several elements involved in each case of marital tension or parent-child conflict. Sometimes the difficulty arises over the employment of a daughter. Perhaps her parents question the propriety of her working at certain tasks such as those of a theater usher or dance-hall hostess. Perhaps her mother is "socially ambitious" and resents any employment of

the daughter. Here are problems on which we need a great deal more research.

*Economic Status and Opportunities.* Despite the fact that large numbers of women have found places in business and industry, it is still a man's world as far as compensation is concerned. "Equal pay for equal work" has been a slogan of the woman's movement for some time but represents an ideal far from realized. Although many women earn more than many men, taken profession by profession and job by job, this is not true. To be sure, the types of work in which women are employed in the largest numbers are not highly skilled jobs. Also many of the jobs are seasonal as in the garment trade, so that considerable periods of idleness may be expected. Women constitute definitely a marginal supply of labor, notoriously poorly paid. The reserve is large and willing, hence wage rates do not have to match those for men. Another factor which has been operative in maintaining these consistently lower rates is the lack of trade-union organization among women, whereby a concerted effort to improve rates of pay and conditions of work may be carried through.

A recent bulletin of the Women's Bureau examines the earnings of both men and women at comparable if not identical operations. Consistently women's wages are less than men's. In clerical occupations in Chicago, women earned from 63 to 86 per cent of what men earned.[24] Among office workers in New York, women earned about one half what the men in the same offices received. Figures from Ohio revealed that women earned about half as much as men working in retail stores, until 1933. From then on, earnings have averaged two thirds of the men's rate. This is presumably due to the lowering of men's wages during the depression and the raising of women's through the National Recovery Administration.[25] Among

[24] Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, *Differences in the Earnings of Women and Men* (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin No. 152 [1938]), p. 17.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 23–4.

domestic-service workers, discrepancies between the remuneration offered men and women are also pronounced. Data from a small survey made by the Y.W.C.A. in 1935 and 1936 show that women working on maintenance jobs earned about two thirds as much as the men. In terms of dollar earnings, 94 per cent of the women but only 39 per cent of the men received less than $20.[26]

Wages in manufacturing establishments are far more difficult to compare because variations in type of work are so great. Wages have been examined on the basis of hourly rates in various studies. A study of hosiery mills showed that more women than men received less than 25 cents an hour for their tasks, but slightly more women than men received more than 45 cents an hour.[27] A more detailed study in 1935, covering eighteen occupations in large industrial establishments, revealed, in general, lower wages for women than for men doing the same type of work.

> There were almost no instances in which any man in these plants with wages reported, no matter in what occupation, received less than 40 cents an hour, but many of the women in the occupations described below were paid only 35 cents or less, though some of them required a considerable degree of dexterity or expertness.[28]

In cotton goods, hosiery, and underwear, women's wages most nearly approach men's, and the differences for many occupations were slight. In cotton, for example, women earned from 85 to 98 per cent of the men's average.[29]

Women working at distinctly unskilled operations earn less than do men in unskilled jobs. The National Industrial Conference Board data on the wages of unskilled men and women workers over a period of years show consistently lower rates for women, but the

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

differences have been somewhat minimized since the beginning of the depression.[30] Similar studies of general wage rates in three industrial states show similar consistent differences between the remuneration of men and women over a period of years. Differentials between men and women carry over even to the professions. Women teachers and professors in colleges, on the whole, receive smaller remuneration than men for the same tasks.

These lower earnings often mean hardship for the woman worker and may mean that it is difficult for her to live. To be sure, where her income is supplementary to other earnings, her wage augments the family income. But for women who are heads of families and for young girls living alone, the problem of living adequately on their meager earnings may be acute. How can a young girl not in her own home maintain herself on $8 or $10 a week? Many do exist, but they suffer from deprivations of clothing—so dear to the feminine heart—of proper food, of funds for recreation, even of comfortable living arrangements.

The majority of women are in occupations holding no great future for employees. On the whole, manufacturing and domestic tasks require the same type of service year in and year out, and advancement in either pay or responsibility is slight. The situation with the mass of clerical workers is much the same. Although here initiative may count for more and some promotions may be made from stenographer to secretary to office manager, few advance far because business needs a large number of routine workers for the many simple tasks—filing, running the comptometer, assembling operations—which lead to no definite goal. Moreover, the public schools and the private business schools are turning out hundreds every year who are glad to get a job even at very modest wages.

Another grim specter is that of age. The superannuation of the worker, whether male or female, at increasingly early ages has received consideration in Chapter 4. But where women are con-

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

cerned, it is especially disturbing. Employers are accused of giving preference to younger blood. Experience and skill are apparently ignored. Employment agencies discourage women over forty, even over thirty-five, from applying for positions in industry or secretarial work. Practically all a woman over thirty-five can get to do is selling on commission. One writer who investigated women's complaints regarding these limitations said: "When trying to find work older women may go from shop to shop and from factory to factory. They may register with agencies. They may insert or answer newspaper advertisements. Whichever medium they choose, the age barrier confronts them." [31]

Reasons for discrimination against older women workers include fear that they may lose more time on account of illness, that they may require higher wages or pensions, and preference for young, energetic, attractive girls. On the other hand, some employers are influenced by the greater stability of older women, since they are past the stage of using a job as a stopgap between school and matrimony. In defense of the employers, who are often looked upon as cold-blooded and unsympathetic, it has been pointed out that women should give more thought to their future, particularly in acquiring experience and education. This should equip them for something better than the limited opportunities in unskilled and routine positions in which training and maturity are less essential.

The woman after forty has received attention, however, especially since the depression set in. In San Francisco, a Guidance Bureau was established for the sole purpose of providing work opportunities for older women. After studying the available openings and the qualifications of the applicants, the Bureau stated they had found that: "The possibilities of placing older women in employment have been greatly underestimated, and the generally accepted notion concerning the impracticability of placing older women on jobs has been

[31] Johanna Lobsenz, *The Older Woman in Industry* (1929), p. 233. By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

over-emphasized." [32] From May 1, 1936, to January 25, 1938, the Bureau had placed 856 of the 2,134 women forty years of age or older who had made application to it. These positions varied widely, including jobs in stores, offices, hotels, factories, institutions, and apartment houses, domestic service, nursing, and many miscellaneous positions.[33]

Other debunkers of the alleged hard fate of the woman over forty are Clara Belle Thompson and Margaret Luke Wise who went free-lancing for two months through a number of cities and claimed numerous jobs offered them. They admitted they had educational and professional experience, but pointed out how they approached each opening with considerable study of the situation and demonstration of their ability to fill it. These two women felt that most women of their age were far too much influenced by the age-barrier bugaboo and did not have a psychological attitude which would help them. Their advice to all would-be jobholders of their age was to "(1) revalue yourself, (2) survey the fields in which your talents might be marketed, (3) plan the campaign to land the job." [34]

The trade-union, which has been an effective weapon of men in bettering their conditions of work, cutting down hours of labor, and increasing pay, has been less successful among women. In the clothing industry and its many related trades, women have been most completely organized. The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union is probably the most powerful of the unions of which women constitute a significant proportion. Women at first were not wanted by the men in their unions, and many a charter has prohibited women members. Moreover, the problem of organizing women has proved to be difficult. The regular organizers apparently have not understood the psychology of women; hence progress in

[32] "After 40—What? *School Life*, 23 (1938), 360. By permission of the editor.
[33] *Loc. cit.*
[34] Clara Belle Thompson and Margaret Luke Wise, "We are Forty and We Did Get Jobs," *Saturday Evening Post*, 210 (May 28, 1938), 71. By permission of the editors.

unionization has been slow. Women have been unsympathetic to the union program, have been somewhat shortsighted, and have not realized the benefits of long-time planning. Thus, on the whole, the union has not been an effective force in equalizing economic opportunities.[35] The newer C.I.O. unions, which embrace members of both sexes, have been more successful in drawing women into their organizations. Not only women workers in factories, but clerical workers and some professional people are now organized.

Among the better-paid business and professional women are found organizations of the club type such as the Business and Professional Women's Clubs. These organizations have been championing the rights of women and have done a great deal in their behalf. Their interest has been more in women of their own education and status and less in the industrial and low-paid clerical workers.

*Interest Groups and Recreation.* Outside of the home and family, some women workers maintain a wide range of interests, while others are socially isolated. Many factors appear to influence the choice of avocations and the ways in which leisure time is spent. But there is a dearth of concrete studies comparing the social life of working- and nonworkingwomen and that of workingwomen and workingmen.

In 1931 and 1932, the Y.W.C.A. inquired into the leisure-time interests and activities of the young businesswomen who made up a large part of its membership. This inquiry included those between the ages of 17 and 38 years of age, although most were between 20 and 30. Both girls who were members of the "Y" clubs and other business girls were included, in order that the "Y" influence might not be too selective a factor. The wages of the group that finally answered the questionnaire ranged from $10 to $50 a week, the majority earning between $18 and $30. In the two studies, 551 and 528 women were included. These are small samples and cover mainly girls in metropolitan areas.

[35] Theresa Wolfson, *The Woman Worker and the Trade Union* (1926).

According to the questionnaires, the girls devoted approximately four hours and a quarter a day to leisure. This was increased to between six and seven hours on Saturday and ten hours on Sunday.[36] As was to be expected, the time was variously spent. In the study, interests were distinguished from activities in which a girl actually participated, as determined by check lists. Frequently and significantly, some activity in which a girl would indicate she was much interested would not be checked as being one in which she participated a great deal. For example, 38.4 per cent of those responding in 1931 indicated they were much interested in golf, but only 4.6 per cent checked it as an activity in which they participated to any extent.[37] Similarly 36.1 per cent indicated an interest in aviation, but only 1.1 per cent checked participation. The five leading interests of the 1931 group were travel, theater, automobiling, swimming, and radio. The five leading activities were radio, automobiling, swimming, church, and letter writing. Movies appeared seventh in the interest list and fifteenth in the activities list.[38] Reading was added to the 1932 list and was placed first in both interests and activities. Otherwise little change was noted. When business girls and professional workers were compared, some further differences were found. The professional women indicated greater interest and participation than did the business girls in concerts, the theater, art, lectures, and various educational events. Comparisons of interests and participation seemed to indicate that the business girls were more consistently following their avowed interests than the professional group which had presumably more education and resources and whose salaries were somewhat higher.[39] Distinctions were made between the activities of girls living in simple communities and

[36] Janet F. Nelson, *Leisure-Time Interests and Activities of Business Girls* (1933), pp. 16–20. Data used by permission of The Woman's Press.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[38] *Loc. cit.*

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

those living in metropolitan communities. Church was reported less frequently a Sunday activity in the small than in the larger communities. Picnicking, gardening, and boating were emphasized much more in the smaller communities.[40] After tabulating the uses of spare time, the investigator found that reading and entertaining and visiting took up the greatest number of hours.

Certainly for these women and for many others, opportunities were available for participation in a variety of activities. Those engaged in by the largest number of women and occupying the most time were activities which could be carried on alone or with one or two companions. Strictly speaking, they were not group activities. But this conclusion may be a bit misleading since club membership was not specifically reported. Many indicated an interest in church, the most frequent form of group activity. The interests and activities of the married women workers and homemakers studied by Miss La Follette emphasized reading, listening to the radio, and conversing with friends.[41] Hospitality in entertaining was noted as well as visiting friends and relatives. These women were, on the whole, quite active in club and other organization affairs. Sixty-one per cent participated in 957 community organizations. Chiefly these were religious, professional, and social. Educational, civic, and patriotic groups claimed smaller numbers.[42]

This discussion points to the fact that in these few sample studies many opportunities for social participation by workingwomen are found. The extent of participation has not been measured. Nor do we have comparable evidence of what nonworkingwomen do with their time outside of household duties. Presumably many workingwomen have neither time nor money for much in the way of recreation or club membership. It is our impression that limited financial

[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 43–4.
[41] La Follette, *op. cit.*, pp. 128–9.
[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 133–4.

resources may be a more serious barrier than limited time. Most of the very active clubwomen, as was noted in the chapters on economic limitations, are from a class financially secure.

*Programs for Equalizing Women's Opportunities.* The efforts of labor organization to better the conditions of women workers have been mentioned. With few exceptions, they have not been very effective. Legislation, mostly by the states, has been designed to remedy the abuses found in women's work, in general conditions of employment, hours of labor, and rates of pay. Although women are still notoriously paid less than men and the wages are in many cases very low, minimum-wage legislation has definitely served to raise the level. At the present time, some twenty-five states have mandatory minimum-wage laws.[43] Most of these are industrial states, so that women in factories have a measure of protection as far as wages are concerned. Experience with the administration of these laws in such states as California, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin show that their enforcement has materially raised the wage rates over the course of years. Minima have not become maxima, but have been "upped" several times.[44]

Laws regulating the number of hours a woman may work and prohibiting nightwork in certain occupations have likewise proved a boon. The new Federal Wages and Hours Law affects men and women alike. Legislation of this type assures women workers of more time for family, recreation, religion, education, and other forms of social participation. A few states have laws prohibiting a woman from working for specified periods before or after childbirth. Occupations where injuries may be incurred, as in mines and quarries, and occupations where moral hazards are great, as work in saloons, have been prohibited to women in many states. These laws do offer some basis for claiming discrimination against women.

[43] John B. Andrews in *Social Work Year Book, 1939*, p. 215.

[44] Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, *Women in the Economy of the United States* (1937), pp. 101–06.

Objections have been raised, strangely enough, on the part of women themselves to all these provisions. Their criticism is that by such protective and prohibitive legislation women are kept from having equal rights with men.

Other movements to equalize the opportunities of workingwomen are concerned in promoting educational facilities. The schools, Y.W.C.A., settlement houses, and other organizations offer a variety of courses both vocational and cultural. Those who have been forced to leave school early, those who wish specific training for a more skilled job, those who want some avocational outlet may partake of these with relatively little expense. The whole adult-education movement opens opportunities to workingwomen as well as to other adults. To some of the low-paid industrial and clerical workers particularly, summer schools have been made available, offering courses in economics, English, and related subjects. These form part of a general movement for workers' education, the objective of which is to provide opportunities especially suited to the needs of wage earners.

The results of our search for evidence concerning the social participation of workingwomen are quite inconclusive. Without more data, we are not warranted in generalizing concerning the relative amounts and kinds of group and cultural activity of working- and nonworkingwomen, or of workingwomen and workingmen.

## Suggested Readings

Abbott, Edith, *Women in Industry*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1910. The most complete history of the place of woman in industry and the conditions under which she worked early in the century.

Berry, Gwendolyn Hughes, *Mothers in Industry*. New York: New Republic, Inc., 1925. An investigation into the reasons why mothers work and how they manage to care for home and children at the same time.

La Follette, Cecile Tipton, *A Study of the Problems of 652 Gainfully*

*Employed Married Women Homemakers.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 619, 1934. A careful analysis of occupations and problems as reported by selected married women who are employed.

Lobsenz, Johanna, *The Older Woman in Industry.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929. A thorough examination of the problems of older women seeking employment.

Nelson, Janet Fowler, *Leisure-Time Interests and Activities of Business Girls.* New York: The Woman's Press, 1934. Reports of a survey of the interests and activities of a thousand business girls, mostly members of Y.W.C.A. clubs.

United States Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletins. Washington: Government Printing Office.

Pidgeon, Mary Elizabeth, *Differences in the Earnings of Women and Men,* No. 152, 1938. Factual reports from different industries and states.

Pidgeon, Mary Elizabeth, *Women in the Economy of the United States of America,* No. 155, 1937. A summary report with statistics.

Pidgeon, Mary Elizabeth, *Trends in the Employment of Women, 1928–1936,* No. 159, 1938. Facts and figures showing the effects of the depression on women workers.

Pidgeon, Mary Elizabeth, *Women in Industry,* No. 164, 1939. A series of papers to aid study groups. Bibliography.

Wolfson, Theresa, *The Woman Worker and the Trade Unions.* New York: International Publishers, 1926. This book examines the economic status of women and factors affecting their unionization. Reports progress of women in unions.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Make a study of the social participation of selected samples of women between the ages of 18 and 30 who are (*a*) unmarried and still in school or college, (*b*) married and neither in school nor at work, (*c*) married and employed outside the home, and (*d*) unmarried and employed outside the home. Perhaps the co-operation of a Y.W.C.A., trade-union, business and professional women's club, or other organized group can be secured. Use may be made of Chapin's scale to measure participation in organized groups, and of Jessie Bernard's scale (see

Queen and Thomas, *The City*, p. 308 ff.) to measure neighboring. Other forms of social participation can doubtless be studied best by means of a schedule devised for this particular purpose.

2. Make a comparative study of attitudes of the four classes of women mentioned above. Devise a simple schedule covering attitudes toward marriage, employment, citizenship, and related subjects. (See Lundberg, *Social Research*, chap. 9.)

3. Inquire in the local community what occupations are open to women. If any are closed, seek to discover the probable reasons. Ask about the stability, speed, accuracy, and demands of women workers. Such an inquiry may well engage the co-operation of Y.W.C.A., trade-union, business and professional women's club, or chamber of commerce.

4. Study the constituency of a local Y.W.C.A. to learn in what proportions the members and other participants belong to the four classes named above.

5. Inquire what happens to the children of working mothers in the local community. Ask separately about small children and those who attend school. Who looks after them? Where do they spend their out-of-school hours? Who are their companions? What do they do?

6. Obtain employment data from the proper state department as to the number of women employed in your city and your state. In what occupations do women predominate? Look up figures on their age and marital status. If local data are not available, census data for the state may be compared with those for the United States as a whole.

7. Examine any available studies of working mothers; assemble data concerning the problems presented therein as to the mother's role in the household, supervision of the children, activities and interests of each member outside the home, economic and social status.

8. Endeavor to secure some biographical or autobiographical material on working mothers and compare with the findings of general studies. Note particularly the effect on family relationships and social participation of various members of the family.

9. Assemble data on occupations forbidden to women in general and to married women in particular. What causes are alleged for such exclusion in each case? In getting this material, inquire from local commercial and manufacturing establishments as to their policies regarding employment of women.

10. Seek data from Federal and local employment agencies as to the

number of women placed within a certain length of time, and in what industries. What obstacles are found to the employment of unmarried women, and of married women?

11. Secure local information on wage rates paid women and men for the same type of work. Is there a differential in favor of men? In what occupations? Compare material with that from the U. S. Women's Bureau.

12. Secure data from unions as to membership of women in recent years; compare these data with earlier figures. Note advantages to the women, if any; opportunities afforded for social participation through unions. Give special attention to International Ladies' Garment Workers Union.

# *Chapter 23*

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

*Approaches to Social Problems.* In Part I of this book, we discussed various ways of conceiving social problems. We observed that by some people social problems are identified with individuals who are considered burdens or nuisances by the groups of which they are members. By other students, the emphasis is placed on deviation from hypothetical norms. This point of view differs relatively little from the first, since it is precisely those whose condition or behavior is out of line with the usual who annoy and burden us. With reference to these troublesome persons, there are several types of social problems. In the first place, there are technical and administrative questions: how to carry out programs of action which are regarded as necessary and wise. Second, there are questions of policy: people are agreed that a given situation is undesirable and that something should be done about it, but they disagree as to what should be done. Finally, we have moral issues in which people disagree as to whether given behavior is really bad. We may illustrate these distinctions with reference to divorce. To reverse the order just followed, there is first the moral issue of whether or not divorce is an evil. Among those who condemn it, there is the further question of policy: shall it be forbidden by law or restrained by educational and religious measures. Finally, those who oppose divorce and prefer persuasion to coercion have the specific problem of what will appeal to persons they hope to influence. All these questions might be described as "practical." In contrast there are "theoretical" problems, e. g., what are the facts

about divorce? How frequently does it occur? Under what circumstances? What comes after? What attempts have been made to control it? With what results? These are the questions of outsiders looking on, themselves not responsible for doing anything directly about the matter under consideration.

There are still other respects in which people's approaches to social problems may differ. Some persons get very excited about such issues. They feel very strongly. The objects of their attention are either unfortunates who have been gravely abused and ought to be rescued from their persecutors or villains who ought to be punished severely. Such sentimental pity and righteous indignation are emotional expressions common among uplifters and reformers who are so eager to do something that they cannot wait to examine the situation they fain would modify. In contrast with the persons just described are others who view the social scene more dispassionately. Among these latter, who stand apart and examine social problems with calm detachment, some fix their attention on physical aspects—sickness, accident, heredity, and material environment. Others concentrate on the mental life—feeble-mindedness, mental disorders, troublesome ideas and attitudes. Another group deals with the economic side—employment, wages, costs of living, and insurance. A fourth group is concerned with government—graft, inefficiency, political machines, and the spoils system. Finally, there are people called sociologists who sometimes try to combine all the other points of view and sometimes present a new frame of reference.

Among the problems that interest sociologists are these: What happens to individuals when one of their groups is demoralized or broken up? What makes groups go to pieces? How are persons affected by culture lags and conflicts? What happens to groups and institutions when individuals present unusual physical and mental traits? What roles can such persons—e. g., blind, lame, cardiac, neurasthenic, schizophrenic—play in their social groups?

All of these issues—biological, psychological, economic, political, and sociological—are abstractions from total human situations. It is necessary to select from the "great big buzzing confusion" of any major social problem some particular aspect for concentrated study, if we are to make much headway in understanding "society." We cannot comprehend the whole at once; and yet we need to see the parts in their interrelations. Hence, we devote ourselves to one phase of a problem situation, but try to see it in its setting.

*Scope and Method of This Book.* Out of the many possible ap proaches to the field of social problems, we have chosen to center our attention on the social participation of persons who are handicapped in body, mind, purse, or status. In thus formulating our task, we have made no assumptions as to the moral value of any particular degree of social participation. The measurement of such behavior can be carried on regardless of whether one has a preference for "joiners" or recluses or neither. In other words, our concern is with the facts, not with their evaluation. The latter is important too, but it does not fall within the area we have undertaken to explore.

In the study of social participation, it might have been desirable to establish norms, in the sense of averages, by examining a large random sample of the general population. But this was not practicable for us, and as yet no one else seems to have done it. Another project which might well have been undertaken would have involved two samples: one of persons regarded (by common observation, if not by actual measurement) as active in social groups and possessing a wealth of cultural experience, the other of persons whose range of contacts is known to be narrow and cultural experience meager. By comparing the two samples with reference to many items, we might discover what factors are correlated with high and low degrees, respectively, of social participation. Such a study would have had the advantage of relative freedom from

bias; e. g., as to whether an amputation or the "condition" of an athlete, an empty purse or a large bank account, a dark skin or a blond complexion, promiscuity or virginity, is regularly associated with a high or a low participation score. But this also was too large a task for our resources, and it seems not to have been carried out on a large scale by anyone else.

After all, the writing of a textbook is not a research project in the usual sense. It is a task in collating, synthesizing, and interpreting the results of research previously carried out and in projecting new research for which there is apparent need. Hence, we have looked through monographs and journals, official reports and agency files, to see what evidence we could assemble. We have centered our attention on the social participation of individuals with physical, mental, economic, or social characteristics commonly regarded as handicaps. We have sought to discover whether there is evidence that persons with these characteristics participate more or less in social life than persons without the same characteristics.

To answer our questions, we have searched for direct comparisons of so-called handicapped and nonhandicapped persons, e. g., blind and seeing, tuberculous and nontuberculous, feeble-minded and "normal." We have looked further for data concerning individuals before and after the impact of a crisis such as loss of limb, loss of job, bereavement, arrest, substitution of day labor for farm tenancy. We had hoped to find studies comparing two sets of persons with the same handicap, one set having a high index of social participation, the other a low index. Data of the last-named type would presumably indicate factors other than the specific handicap which may have an even greater influence on the part taken in social life.

Our first disappointment came from our failure to find any large-scale studies of the types mentioned. We did discover limited studies of small samples which bear directly on our central problem, such as the studies of aged persons in New York State, rural folks

in Illinois, and hard-of-hearing boys in New York City. But, for the most part, we have had to depend on case studies, general observation, and various kinds of indirect or circumstantial evidence, such as the data presented concerning unmarried mothers, "poor whites," and crippled children. For the present, little else seems to be available. It has doubtless been noted by the reader that our data pertain chiefly to the amount (quantity) of social participation and rather little to the character (quality). This is not due to any oversight on our part. We have sought, but rarely found, objective data bearing on the quality of group relationships and cultural experience.

On the whole, the results of our inquiries show that the alleged handicaps really do restrict the social participation of individuals affected. However, the data pertaining to various situations are far from uniform in type and value. Hence, we have roughly divided the handicaps into three categories according as the evidence is (1) fairly convincing, though not complete or precise, (2) convincing as far as it goes, but rather inadequate, (3) inadequate and sometimes conflicting, but highly suggestive. (1) In the first category, we have placed senescence, blindness, deafness, tuberculosis, schizophrenia, feeble-mindedness, alcoholism, drug addiction, child labor, and low income. (2) In the second, we have placed transiency, limited schooling, race prejudice, illegitimacy, and imprisonment. (3) In the third, we have placed orthopedic impairments, diabetes, cardiac disorders, syphilis, paranoia, unemployment, gainful employment of women, and class barriers. Let it be remembered that this classification does not correspond to our own hypotheses; it merely represents the types of data we have been able to secure. By the same token, it indicates where further research is most urgent.

*Comparisons of Handicapped and Nonhandicapped Persons.* For the comparison of persons with and without given handicaps, we have some general statistical data. But usually it is hard to tell

whether the associated factors should be considered causes, effects, or merely concomitants. For example, it is clearly demonstrated that the incidence of tuberculosis is greatest on the lowest income level and in areas of deteriorated housing. But we are not warranted in saying that poverty and bad housing result directly from tuberculosis; neither are we justified in calling them causes. All we really know is that they are frequently parts of the same complex situation. Moreover, neither low incomes nor dilapidated dwellings are themselves measures of social participation. However, we have found considerable evidence in support of the proposition that schooling and membership in formally organized groups vary directly with income. Since we know that it costs money to go to school and to belong to many organizations, it is reasonable to infer that limited social participation does result from low income.

In our studies of mental disorders, we found the incidence to vary directly with age-class and size of community and inversely with income. It is higher among males than among females. It is related to marital status, declining as we go through the following series: widowed, divorced, single, married. Sex, age, size of community, and income are not themselves measures of social participation. In fact, we have no adequate basis for holding that males are more active socially than females, or less so. While it is well established that old people tend to drop out of groups and lose personal contacts, we do not know whether throughout life there is any consistent direction of change. For example, the peak of social participation may come for some people in adolescence, for others in middle life. As to size of community, it is popularly supposed that rural people are more isolated than city folk. This may be true, but as yet it has not been statistically demonstrated. Moreover, with reference to all these items, their place in the cause-and-effect process is far from clear. Marital status, of course, is one measure of social participation. Yet we do not know how often mental disorder results from a break in marital relations

or how often the marriage bond is broken after, and presumably because of, a mental disorder. We do not know how many single persons break down mentally because of disappointment in love or failure to find a mate, and how many remain single because of some mental abnormality.

A simpler relationship appears in the case of the blind. Their consistently lower earnings than those of seeing persons can hardly be accidental. But the fact that there are more widowed and divorced persons among the blind than in the general population is difficult to explain. Perhaps this is related to the fact that the incidence of blindness increases with age. Likewise there are more widows and divorced persons in the upper age groups. Apparently neither blindness nor broken marriage is a cause of the other; it is simply a case of both accumulating as the years pass.

In the matter of race prejudice, we have extensive statistical data which show that Negroes receive smaller incomes than whites, own less property, are more commonly found in unskilled jobs, receive less schooling, belong less frequently to trade-unions. Schooling and union membership are themselves forms of social participation. Money and other possessions are means to social participation. As a matter of fact, low income is associated with all the other handicaps discussed in this book. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, to determine the relative influence of economic and other factors.

We turn now from general statistical data to studies of small samples. These are useful in that they shed light on many points not covered by wider enumerations. Some of them, moreover, involve the use of control groups and rather detailed schedules. Among the findings of such limited studies are these. Participation in organized groups (measured by membership, office holding, payment of dues, taking part in programs) increases as we go through the following series: farm laborers, sharecroppers, tenants, owners. The amount of schooling is directly related to income,

participation in interest groups, and age of marriage; it is inversely related to frequency of marriage, number of children, marital conflict, and delinquency. Because the samples are so small, we frankly question the representative nature of some of these findings, particularly the relation of schooling to marital conflict. Other limited studies indicate that crippled persons are less likely to marry than those without orthopedic impairments, that hearing children do not play freely with the deaf, that mental defectives are more likely to commit crime than are "normal" persons, that syphilitics and transients are the objects of considerable hostility, and that child laborers are handicapped physically, intellectually, and vocationally.

In addition to the quantitative data referred to, there are many case studies and testimony based on more or less skilled observation. From the case studies, we learn that many of the handicapped are troubled by self-consciousness, inferiority feelings, and fear of rejection by other people. For example, we find diabetics humiliated by their dependence on insulin, their inability to eat everything that is set before them, especially at parties, and their fear that strangers will regard them as "dope fiends." We find persons suffering from minor mental disorders hard to get along with, suspicious, complaining, scheming, feeling abused, boasting of nonexistent attainments, spreading malicious gossip, and otherwise making trouble for their associates. We find the chronically ill worrying about themselves or their families or, on the other hand, refusing to face the fact of their disability and carry out the regime on which life itself may depend. We see the tuberculous pursuing health in distant climes far from friends and relatives. We learn of unmarried mothers struggling to conceal their pregnancy, wondering what to do with their babies, driven out of parental homes, striving to establish themselves in some new setting. In general, the case studies give more intimate pictures of human experience in the face of adversity. But case studies alone warrant no general

conclusions. Out of many case studies, uniformities must be selected. Cases presenting a given handicap must be compared with similar cases from which the handicap is absent. In other words, the case-study method must be combined with the statistical method in order that we may attain the fullest possible understanding of any type of social situation.

From general observation, we find a large number of the more seriously handicapped living in institutions where they are almost wholly isolated from family, neighborhood, community, and other group life. This is true of many feeble-minded, "insane," tuberculous, and aged; it is true of smaller numbers of blind, deaf, crippled, and chronically ill persons. We see the blind restricted in physical movement, unable to appreciate facial expressions, to enjoy movies and art objects. We find the deaf speaking with monotonous voices, unable to appreciate tonal qualities, to enjoy lectures and music. We observe the transient being "kicked about," exploited when their labor is needed, driven out when the work is done, arrested on suspicion, imprisoned as vagrants. We see Negroes excluded from restaurants, theaters, Pullman cars, denied the privilege of voting and holding office. In newspapers, in barbershops, and in drawing rooms, we find the unemployed and recipients of relief ridiculed and condemned. Such observations may not be "scientific" in the sense of being made under controlled conditions, but surely they are not without value. We agree that casual observations and impressions should be checked by controlled observations, enumerations, and experiments whenever possible, but in the meantime it is hardly intelligent to reject the testimony of experienced persons.

*Comparison of Persons Before and After Being Handicapped.* In our search for comparisons of persons before and after being handicapped, we have found much less information than we expected. To be sure, there are some kinds of handicap that exist from birth; for their victims there is no "before." This is true

of most feeble-minded, persons of limited schooling, those suffering from race prejudice, members of the "lower" classes, and illegitimate children.

General statistical data bearing on this phase of our inquiry are very scarce. More are available concerning the aged than concerning any other type of folks we have considered. Numerous studies show that the homes of elderly people have frequently been broken, that they have less employment and lower incomes than in their earlier years.

Studies of small samples show that in old age formerly self-supporting persons become dependent upon children, private charity, or public assistance; formerly vigorous individuals become broken in health both physically and mentally; formerly sociable persons become isolated and lonely. Similar studies of the tuberculous show the development of marital tensions and serious financial loss. Between syphilitics and healthy persons, social distance is shown to develop. The unemployed are found to lose their position and role in the family and to be detached from union, church, club, and other groups. In all these instances, the number studied has been small; further research may lead to quite different conclusions. Nevertheless, until additional data are at hand, we may accept these findings as tentatively valid. In the study of alcoholism, careful experiments have been performed showing definite physical and mental consequences. These experiments provide indirect evidence of social handicaps, but do not themselves constitute measures of social participation. Waller's study of a small sample of divorcees displays vividly the social insecurity of persons whose marriage has been legally disrupted.

Case studies and general observations must furnish most of the present basis for inferences about changes produced by the impact of crises that leave individuals handicapped in various ways. From case studies, we note the reversal of parent-child relations as members of the family grow older. We find expressions of bitterness,

petulance, worry, planlessness. We discover that men crippled in adult life often have to accept lower-paid work. The cardiac, the diabetic, and the tuberculous are found to react variously to the interruption of their customary mode of living. Some are annoyed, others humiliated; some easily become emotionally dependent, others are quite rebellious. We learn that the discovery of syphilis has little immediate effect on the jobs of most patients, but that the victims are often troubled with feelings of guilt. Among the mentally ill, we find three general sorts of reaction: some withdraw more and more from the society of other people; others become nuisances, untidy, perhaps excitable; a few become positive menaces, scheming and violent. Drug addicts are found frequently slipping into slovenliness, irresponsibility, and untrustworthiness. In general, case studies are especially helpful in revealing changes in habits and attitudes of persons who become handicapped and of those with whom they associate. In other words, they yield insight into the more intimate phases of these experiences. They enable us to view approximately total situations, viewing various factors in their setting and sequence. But until they are collated and compared, they do not warrant generalizations. Once more the case-study and the statistical methods need to be combined in order to give us the best possible understanding of what happens when persons acquire handicaps.

*Comparisons of Socially Active and Isolated Persons with Handicaps.* General observation and common sense tell us that all handicapped persons are not equally restricted in social participation. In fact, most of us realize that there are wide variations in the group life and cultural experience of persons with the same handicap. Supplementing general observation with the study of single cases, we note that there is often a great difference in the attitudes of the associates of socially active and socially inactive persons. For example, among the crippled and the blind, some are so pitied and protected by their kinsmen and friends that they receive no stimulus

to attain or recover economic and emotional independence. Others are urged so hard that impossible goals are set up, and they presently become discouraged. But still others are helped to understand their actual potentialities and limitations and encouraged to make the most of their abilities and opportunities. It appears that the first two types are very limited in their social contacts while the third type may display a range of experience comparable with that of normal persons.

The social participation of persons with chronic diseases is likewise dependent on the attitudes of their associates. If the latter make a great to-do over the patient's regime, continually reminding him of what he must and must not do, he may become set quite apart from other people and fail to engage in activities well within the limits of his strength. On the other hand, if he looks well, his friends, classmates, fellow workmen, and kinsmen may urge him to do things that endanger his life. If he refuses, they may accuse him of laziness or lack of spirit. If he yields to their pressure, his life may be appreciably shortened; but in order to resist, he may have to isolate himself. The most satisfactory adjustment seems to come when both the patient and those about him, understanding what is required and what denied, proceed in a matter-of-fact way to take a reasonable part in the life of family, community, church, club, and other groups. What we have just said appears to be especially true of patients with diabetes and heart disease. They are also characteristic of some persons with tuberculosis. But here there are other complications. Because the disease is communicable, partial isolation is prescribed. Because climate may be helpful or the reverse, the patient may be encouraged to go far away from his old acquaintances. In the Southwest, he is not likely to be welcome, and his isolation is thereby increased. In the case of syphilis, we have not merely a chronic, communicable disease, but one which is often viewed with disgust and condemnation. Those who are aware of the patient's condition are

very likely to shun him both as a source of infection and as a moral leper.

Turning to mental deviates, we find from case to case evidence that the attitudes of other people are very important in determining the role of the patient. Some families, regarding all institutions with fear or shame, refrain from hospitalizing a patient who might be helped thereby. Some even retain in the household individuals who are almost incapable of taking any part in group life. Others, whether from personal insight or from medical advice, help the unfortunate ones to continue or develop a modest place in family, neighborhood, and school or work group. It appears that the understanding, poise, and skill of relatives, friends, employees, and others may at times make the difference between complete breakdown and recovery. In the case of feeble-mindedness, such habits and attitudes of associates may determine whether the defective person is to be a lifelong burden or a partially self-sustaining member of society.

So we might go on with our observations of other types of handicapped persons—those with low incomes, the unemployed, transients, the unschooled, Negroes, "poor whites," the illegitimate, ex-convicts, and divorcees. For all of them, the attitudes of close associates and of the public at large seem to be oftentimes decisive. However, it should be remembered that our evidence on this point consists chiefly of case studies and general observation.

Observation of the handicapped yields some other tentative conclusions. One of the most plausible is that presence of facilities for diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental conditions often makes the difference between a rich and a meager social experience. Among those with small incomes, other decisive factors appear to be: age, health, vocational skill, size of family, and membership in groups prepared to offer both material and moral support when needed. Persons with limited education seem to find their best opportunities in the midst of an expanding economy. When a region

or an industry is developing rapidly, formal schooling seems to be much less significant than when the economic life is stabilized or regressing. This is one of the more dubious inferences that might be drawn from the type of evidence we are discussing. Another possible conclusion is that the social value of education fluctuates with several variables such as types of vocational opportunities, rate of cultural change, fashion, and others not yet identified. Race prejudice is more or less confining, depending on the relative numbers of the two ethnic groups concerned, the keenness of economic competition, the traditions of the region, and the financial and intellectual resources at the disposal of the minority "race."

In addition to case studies and general observation, we can draw on a few studies of small samples for light on differences between socially active and inactive persons with handicaps. Thus studies of the mentally deficient indicate that social participation tends to vary with the I.Q., age at which special training is begun and length of time it is continued, and supervision after leaving an institution. With reference to the aged, it has been found that their social participation varies with physical and mental health, distance from old friends and relatives, economic independence, and the previous cultivation of avocational interests. But unfortunately there are very few statistical studies that make comparisons of active members of society with those who are relatively isolated. Hence, until there has been a great deal more research of this type, we are forced to depend on case studies, and the impressions of those best acquainted with the handicapped.

*Sociological Significance of Social Programs.* Throughout the book, we have presented brief descriptions of social programs for dealing with the various handicaps. These are significant in several ways. They display some of the possibilities of overcoming certain limitations and of carrying on despite handicaps which cannot be removed. They indicate some of the cultural changes that may be involved in the control of troublesome conditions. They give a

hint of the processes of organization and propaganda in social movements.

We have found rather well-developed programs of treatment and prevention of tuberculosis, blindness, and illiteracy; programs of special education for the deaf and the mentally deficient; combined medical and educational care for crippled children; and economic provision for the aged. In other fields, there are newer programs, whose effectiveness remains to be tested. These have to do with venereal-disease control, mental hygiene, alcoholism, drug addiction, race relations, unemployment, and transiency. Programs for overcoming class barriers, low incomes, and the stigma attached to imprisonment are relatively undeveloped. Indeed, some of the other handicaps might well be designated as neglected areas of social welfare.

In so far as these programs have been developed, they give some indication of the possibilities of overcoming the handicaps discussed and of social participation despite the handicaps. As already suggested, much headway has been made toward the arrest of tuberculosis, the correction of orthopedic impairments, the cure of syphilis, the modification of certain mental abnormalities, and the overcoming of illiteracy. In so far as any handicapping condition can be removed, its victims are freed not only from physical, mental, and other limitations, but also from obstacles to social participation. To be sure, the checking of a physical or mental impairment, or the increase of one's income, does not guarantee that the individual will attain or recover a high degree of social participation. But if he remains relatively isolated, the reason will have to be sought elsewhere than in the specific impediment that has been removed. There are certain conditions which cannot be removed, but in spite of which some persons are enabled to take an active part in the cultural and group life about them. Such are diabetes, certain heart diseases, feeble-mindedness, old age, illegitimacy, and a dark skin. The circumstances under which some persons who are

chronically ill, mentally deficient, aged, or socially ostracized carry on against great odds help us to understand some of the intangible obstacles to social participation and how they may be overcome.

In our study of underpaid wage earners, Negroes, ex-convicts, unmarried mothers, and divorcees we discovered that some fundamental changes in the mores are prerequisite to the overcoming of their social handicaps. That is, more depends on general social attitudes than on any particular organizational mechanics, economic arrangements, or philanthropic measures. That such attitudes change slowly and offer great resistance to the efforts of reformers is very clear. On the other hand, the achievements of movements directed against tuberculosis and illiteracy, during the twentieth century, show that in some instances it is possible to modify popular attitudes and behavior. The history of these movements suggests some of the factors that may be most effective in altering the folkways and mores. However, it is easy to give too much credit to persons, groups, and measures that happen to have been much in the limelight. It is always well to suspect that a given change in the public health, economic welfare, or social attitudes might have taken place without their participation. The difficulty is that these activities are not really experiments, for they are not carried on under controlled conditions. Nevertheless, the programs we have considered and their sequelae are highly suggestive; they indicate some of the possibilities, limitations, and processes of directed social change.

*Next Steps.* Obviously a great deal of work remains to be done before anyone can speak with much authority concerning even the limited aspect of social problems which we have chosen for our study. The first need is to develop more comprehensive scales for measuring social participation in general. Chapin has devised one which does very well for interest groups. We hope that a set of tests may be worked out covering the ground outlined in Chapter 1. Then such instruments need to be standardized for regions,

urban and rural communities, sex and age classes, perhaps for ethnic groups. After that, they can be used in comparing handicapped and nonhandicapped persons, the same persons before and after they become handicapped, and handicapped persons who display widely varying degrees of social participation. Here is a program of research that we hope will intrigue enough students for a long enough period of time to yield results that will greatly enrich our knowledge of this important phase of sociology.

## Projects for Further Study

1. Outline projects for the study of types of persons not dealt with in the text to see how their social participation compares with that of types that have been studied in this course. Some of the types that might be considered are: widows, widowers, orphans, soldiers, sailors, lumberjacks, fishermen, coal miners. It need not be implied that there is anything "pathological" about these people. Simply raise the question whether their participation in social groups and cultural activities is more or less than that of other persons much like them. Make use of life histories, published articles, pamphlets, books, general observation, personal interviews, and formal tests whenever feasible. It would be interesting, and to some people very surprising, if it should be found that orphans show a higher social-participation score than that of children whose homes are unbroken; or if soldiers should rank higher than plumbers, or sailors higher than dentists. We ourselves do not pretend to know what such studies may reveal. But we warn teachers and students that the results of limited inquiries may be misleading.

2. Assemble the data gathered during the course and compare the social participation of various kinds of handicapped persons. Do these data indicate that some kinds of handicaps limit social participation more than others do? Do they suggest that it may not be the specific physical, psychological, economic, and other conditions that limit social participation so much as folkways and popular attitudes?

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