

THE INSTITUTIONAL CARE OF

Dependent Children

IN NEW ZEALAND

H. C. Mathew

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interested men and women. My thanks are specially due to the heads of the Churches who in the first place lent encouragement by giving their consent to the inquiry, and thereby made easy the approach to the individual institutions and the workers in the field. I am also deeply indebted to the secretaries, superintendents, matrons, and assistants of the various homes visited in the course of the study. Many of them gave freely of their time, and shared with me their hopes and fears concerning their work. I cannot offer recompense to them for their help and kindness other than to express the hope that the study will prove to be a helpful piece of research. I am also under obligation to ministers, teachers, and friends with whom I have discussed various matters connected with the research. To the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, which provided the financial backing, and gave through its Director and staff invaluable counsel and direction, I am very grateful.

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THE INSTITUTIONAL CARE OF
DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Scope of the Survey

THE PARENTAL HOME is the natural environment for the development of children. It provides a protective and stimulating medium for physical, mental, and spiritual growth which no other type of care can effectively replace. Not all children, however, are so fortunate as to be assured of the continued care and protection of their parents from infancy to adult life. For this group substitute homes must take the place of the parental home. Some children have never had homes; others have been deprived of them through the death of their parents; still others have been removed from their homes in their early life, because society has declared the homes unsuitable for the proper training and upbringing of children. Whether placed with relatives, in an institution, or in a foster home, these children are dependent upon substitute homes for the love, understanding, and security which are so essential to their well-being.

It is very nearly if not entirely accurate to say that in New Zealand 'neglected' children are cared for by the State in foster homes under the direction of the Child Welfare Branch of the Education Department, whereas 'dependent' children are looked after in institutions provided by the various religious bodies. It is, of course, difficult to draw a clear line between 'dependent' children and 'neglected' children. In practice, however,

there is a distinction between those cases in which the State steps in and compels the guardian to surrender the child, and those in which the initiative is taken by the guardian himself. Provision for State action is contained in Section 13 of Part III of the *Child Welfare Act, 1925*:

On the complaint of any constable, or of any Child Welfare Officer that any child is neglected, indigent, or delinquent, or is not under proper control, or is living in an environment detrimental to its physical or moral well-being, any Justice may issue his summons addressed to any person having the custody of the child, requiring him to appear before the Children's Court . . . in order that the child may there be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

In cases of emergency the Justice may issue a warrant authorizing a constable or a Child Welfare Officer to take immediate possession of the child pending further Court action, but it should be noted that children cannot become wards of the State without committal by the Court, except where parents with 'difficult' children seek the aid of the Child Welfare Branch. Section 12 of the Act says:

Agreement for control of children by Superintendent

(1) The Superintendent may, on application in that behalf made by either parent, or by its guardian, or by any person having for the time being the custody or control of the child, assume control of that child for any such period and on such terms as to cost of maintenance, and otherwise as may be agreed upon by the parties.

(2) In respect of any child to whom any agreement under this section relates the Superintendent shall, so long as the child is under his control, have the same powers and responsibilities in all respects as if the child has been committed to his care in accordance with the provisions hereinafter set forth, save that the guardianship of the child shall not by virtue of such agreement be deemed to be vested in the Superintendent.

The number of children thus voluntarily put in the care of the State is very small. In the ten years 1932-1941,

the greatest number in any one year was 18, and for six of the years the number did not exceed 10.

The State is strongly in favour of foster home care of children, whether 'dependent' or 'neglected', and the Child Welfare Branch is required by law to place all children who come under its care in boarding homes, except in unusual circumstances. (During 1940 there were 557 children committed to the care of the State following action taken under Section 13 of the Act, and of these 168 were classified as 'indigent'.) The private organizations, on the other hand, have come to accept care in institutions¹ as the normal method, the typical argument in favour of it being that it has stood the test of years and proved, for all practical purposes, to be quite satisfactory. As so few children are voluntarily committed to the care of the State this is therefore almost the only type of care provided for the purely dependent group.

Hitherto there has been little study of child welfare in New Zealand by independent agencies, and the field is so wide that no one person could hope to compass it in a reasonably short space of time with any degree of thoroughness. For various reasons this survey is restricted to the institutional care provided by the Churches, though it has been necessary to make frequent references to the policy and practice of the State, and the writer has not hesitated to express certain opinions on the relative merits of foster home and institutional care. It will be obvious that these opinions arise only in part from the data of the present investigation, which, as it did not include an intensive study of foster home care, does not in itself provide all the material on which a judgment can be based.

¹ 'Children's home' or simply 'home' are the terms most commonly used by the organizations themselves, which sometimes strongly object to 'institution', a word that admittedly carries implications of drabness and regimentation. 'Institution' is used in this report purely as a matter of verbal convenience, to get round the difficulty of distinguishing clearly between 'children's homes' of the institutional type, foster homes, and ordinary family homes. Where the context makes it clear that the first of these is being referred to, the terms 'home' and 'children's home' are frequently employed.

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Indeed, to 'prove' conclusively that one kind of care is superior to another would demand a large-scale investigation of a peculiarly subtle and difficult kind. The writer can, however, claim a limited amount of first-hand experience of New Zealand foster homes, and he believes that his strong preference for arrangements that approximate as closely as possible to the ordinary family home is consistent with the views of a growing body of social workers and psychologists in many countries. On the other hand, he would be the first to grant the desirability of an intensive investigation of foster home care in New Zealand, comparable to the investigation of the children's homes here reported.

Within the limits just indicated the survey is a comprehensive one, covering administration and finance, buildings and equipment, staffing, social work practice, and general care, and aiming not only to present an accurate picture of life in the children's homes and of their place in the community but also to evaluate the services now being rendered. Chapter 2 contains a brief historical and comparative sketch which shows something of the relation between the type of care being given and past and present practices in other countries, and includes a summary account of the development of child welfare agencies in New Zealand. There follows a long chapter on 'Standards and Objectives'. Evaluation implies criteria, and the investigator was at the outset faced with the difficulty that the controlling bodies have not yet drawn up or agreed upon any detailed set of standards deemed suitable to New Zealand conditions. His own statement bears the marks of his experiences during the present investigation and there is nothing in it that he has not reconsidered in the light of them. But on the whole it represents what was in his mind at the beginning of the study. It therefore belongs logically in the early part of the report and is placed there even though it makes a break between the material on the history of the homes and that on their

conditions and practices today. The remaining chapters (4 to 8) present the detailed findings and recommendations and form the main body of the report. Description and comment are freely mingled, but there should be little difficulty in distinguishing between the objective facts and the writer's opinions about them.

The first step in the investigation was of course to approach the governing bodies of the various institutions to enlist their sympathy and assistance. The following denominations through their appointed representatives and headquarters gave their ready consent and cordial co-operation: The Church of England in New Zealand (His Grace the Archbishop); The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand (The Assembly Social Service Committee); The Methodist Church of New Zealand (The President of the Conference); The Salvation Army in New Zealand (The Social Service Secretary, National Headquarters). The following individual institutions through their respective trust boards and committees also gave their permission for the institutions under their direction to be included in the study: The Manurewa Children's Home (Baptist); The Dingwall Presbyterian Orphanage; The Margaret Watt Home (Presbyterian). When the study first began to take shape, it was hoped that it might be possible to include all the organizations concerned with the care of dependent children, but the Council of Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church could not see their way clear to grant permission for the inclusion of their institutions.

In the five weeks given to field work during 1941 twenty-three institutions situated in various parts of New Zealand were visited and studied. The time available was all too short, and the investigation suffers at some points on this account. For instance, it would have been desirable to have visited many more institutions than those actually seen. Furthermore, when the investigation was begun it was hoped that it would be possible to obtain a certain

amount of statistical material, but it was found that very few of the institutions had readily available more than the most meagre statistics concerning their work. To have delved into records and to have studied case histories would have required many more weeks in the field than it was possible to give.

Not all of the registered homes, however, come within the scope of the study. Eight of the eighty-five registered institutions are maternity homes, while others make only temporary provision for convalescent children. It is estimated that at least one-third of the institutions caring mainly for dependent children was reached. Although this may seem to be a rather small proportion of the total, yet the homes visited were representative enough to give a fair indication of the type and standard of work being done. If anything, the standard of work in those visited was probably higher than that of quite a number of the homes not seen.

Before any of the institutions were visited a rather exhaustive schedule was prepared, covering the specific items on which information was sought. It was not intended that the schedule should be filled in completely for every institution visited, as it was known that in many cases it would be impossible to get complete answers to a number of the questions. The schedule was drawn up in the first instance in order that the investigator might have clear-cut questions in mind when approaching an interview or when looking through an institution. Only in two or three cases was the schedule handed to anyone with the request that he fill it in, and this was done with the full realization that such a procedure had very definite limitations. Usually the schedule was kept in the background so that most of those who were interviewed did not even know of its existence.

Negotiations for the carrying out of the survey were entered upon three years ago. In the meantime war had broken out. Due consideration was given to the question

of postponing the study until the war was over, but it was finally decided to carry on. For one thing, it was felt that as a result of the world conflict there would probably be increased demands upon the organizations working in the field of child care, and that it was therefore desirable to seek to evaluate the services they are now rendering.

The Historical Background

THE PROBLEM of the care of orphan and destitute children has had to be met by every generation. In modern times the difficulties that have to be faced by the homeless child have, perhaps, been intensified, but the exigencies of life have always deprived some children of the natural protection of their own parents. Methods of caring for dependent children have varied greatly among the peoples of the world and have altered from time to time amongst the same people. To put our New Zealand situation in perspective it is necessary first to give an account of how child care has developed in the past and of the methods now used in other countries.¹

The records of ancient peoples give little indication of the two most usual types of care prevalent today, institutional care, and care in a foster home. In the Hammurabi Code provisions for adoption seem to have been framed with an eye to the protection of the new parents rather than of the child himself. In Greece and in Rome there is evidence of occasional cases of adoption, and it was not uncommon for young children to be rescued when

¹ The main sources from which this material has been drawn are:
 Thurston, H. W. Article 'Dependent children' in *Encyclopaedia of the social sciences*. New York 1935.
 Thurston, H. W. *The dependent child*. New York 1930.
 Advisory Committee on Social Questions of the League of Nations. *The placing of children in families*, vols. 1 and 2. Geneva 1938.

abandoned by their parents in accordance with the widespread custom of infant exposure. There is, however, no record of orphan asylums or of other organized institutions for child care, except that in Athens there was some provision made by the State for the children of soldiers who had fallen in battle. On the other hand, the Jews from very early times have taken special care of dependent children. In the pre-Christian era the principle of supporting the poor and of accepting community responsibility for orphans was fully recognized and regularly practised.

The spirit of tender regard for the fatherless which manifests itself so clearly in the writings of the Old Testament was confirmed and reinforced by the teaching of Jesus and the practice of the early Church. As Christianity spread and became more and more a spiritual and social force, and as the Church became organized, the sporadic efforts of individuals were augmented and, perhaps, superseded by the help of deacons who collected funds and distributed them to those in need. Widows were given sums of money to enable them to maintain their children within their own homes, and there was also provision for widows and others to take care of orphans.

For some centuries dependent children continued to be provided for in much the same way, either in their own homes or in small groups, until in the Middle Ages there were established throughout most of Western Europe numbers of hospitals, monasteries, and orphan asylums. In the feudal era, within the obvious limits of the system, the dependent child appears to have received fairly adequate care, for under the prevailing arrangement he had some recognized right to support by the manor, and where this aid was not forthcoming, Church and private charity filled the gap. When, however, the self-sufficient feudal life on the Continent and in England began to break up after the middle of the fourteenth

century, the individual no longer had any claim on the manorial estate.

By the time of Elizabeth, the number of wandering and destitute persons in England became so great that some action was imperative. In 1601 there was passed a Statute, the Forty-third of Elizabeth, which for the first time sought to provide for the care by the civil State out of public taxes of all destitute persons, including children for whom family care, Church charity, or public generosity was not available. The Statute also made provision for the earliest type of foster family care, that of the placing out of dependent children in indenture homes, a practice that was already used by parents who wanted their children to become artisans. By this means a dependent child, if not too young, could be apprenticed out, and could begin to pay at once for his own keep.²

The earliest public institutional care for homeless children was provided in the workhouses, otherwise known as the poorhouses or almshouses, institutions which existed primarily for the housing of derelict adults, and which took under their shelter not only the destitute poor, but the aged, the diseased, the blind, the insane, and the feeble-minded. It later became the accepted practice to put dependent children too young to be apprenticed out into this mixed group of suffering humanity. In time the terrible conditions under which these children lived, especially those indentured in groups to mines and factories, came to be recognized, and other forms of care were gradually evolved. In the eighteenth century religious and private groups began to undertake care of needy children in orphan asylums, which rapidly increased in number in the early part of the nineteenth century. It is interesting to note here, however, that such well-known homes as Dr. Barnardo's Homes and the National Children's Homes and Orphanages were not founded until 1865 and 1869 respectively.

² For a summary of the Statute of 1601 see Thurston, *The dependent child*, 7.

Segregation of children from adults in the public poor-houses was begun after a Royal Commission in 1834. The institutions used by the Poor Law authorities for this purpose were schools of various kinds, not all of which effectively separated the children from adult groups. Some of the schools (later known as 'barrack schools') consisted of a group of buildings housing as many as a thousand children. Other smaller units of these schools, consisting of a cluster of dwellings, were the forerunners of the cottage type of institution which exists today. Another type of institutional care, the scattered home plan, was adopted in England by the Sheffield Poor Law Union in 1893, and now is widely used in other places as well. Under this system the cottages, instead of being grouped together, are scattered over a town or city, each house having its own matron or house-mother. At the present time the local bodies administering the *Poor Law Act* of 1920 maintain not only public workhouse schools, separate schools, and homes, but also pay for the care of children in certain certified private institutions.

In addition to furnishing public care, England, as has already been indicated, has many private institutions and agencies caring for dependent children. Some of these adhere strictly to institutional care, while others like Dr. Barnardo's Homes, for instance, also make provision for boarding out:

There is no one method of treating the children of Dr. Barnardo's Homes. Of course, a regular routine is followed as they pass from the Ever-Open-Door, and particulars of every kind are taken and kept for reference; and what is most important every child passes under the careful scrutiny of the doctor. He it is who is largely responsible for the placing out of the child. . . .

Dr. Barnardo, almost at the same time as he was building up the Girl's Village Home, and other smaller institutions for the care of his little ones, introduced an entirely different system, known as "boarding out". . . . Our Founder had a great vision of boys and girls rescued from the slums being

sent in twos and threes into little cottage homes in the best parts of our rural districts. The experiment was tried, and found to be a success, and at the present time, nearly half of the Largest Family in the World is "boarded out".³

In England, the first order regularizing the boarding out of children by Poor Law authorities was made in 1870, but already in 1869 there were some 347 such children boarded out. By 1906 the number had increased to 8,781 or one-seventh of those in institutions. In 1926 there were in England about 69,000 dependent children, of whom 10,000 were boarded out, 18,000 placed in workhouses, 32,000 in Poor Law Schools, and the remaining 9,000 in other institutions. In 1928 the numbers were considerably reduced in all groups, as widows' and orphans' pensions made it possible for children to remain in their own homes or those of relatives.⁴ In Scotland, the Poor Law authorities did not at any time make extensive use of either almshouses or private institutions. They adopted and still use the method which originated in the parish, of paying widows or married couples to take one or more needy children into their homes. It is estimated that today probably over 90 per cent of all dependent children in Scotland are boarded out in foster homes.

In the United States of America similar arrangements were made for dependent children; first, almshouses; next, special institutions, with indenture as a supplement or a substitute; then the gradual development of foster-home care; and finally the provision of mothers' pensions as a means of maintaining the home. Up till 1875 mixed almshouses and indenture provided most of the care in the older states, but during the nineteenth century an increasing number of orphan asylums was established, mainly by religious bodies and fraternal groups, such as

³ *Sixty-third Annual Report* of the National Incorporated Association of Dr. Barnardo's Homes, 1928, 11.

⁴ Figures for later dates are not available in New Zealand.

the Masonic and other lodges. Indenture was frequently used by Poor Law officials, but after 1853 care in free foster homes without indenture was provided for an increasing number of children, who were accepted without payment, often with a view to adoption. After 1883 the movement to place children in permanent free foster homes gained further support, and about the same time boarding home care, for which payment was given, was introduced. In the meantime hundreds of orphanages had been established by denominational and other private organizations, and at the present time all but one-tenth of these institutions are under the direction of non-State bodies. The prevailing tendency among State and county authorities has been to rely less on State orphanages and more on foster homes and public assistance to mothers.⁵

In 1909 President Theodore Roosevelt called a conference on the care of dependent children, which came to the conclusion that 'the carefully selected foster home is, for the normal child, the best substitute for the natural home', a finding which was later reaffirmed by an international conference held in 1919 under the auspices of the United States Children's Bureau. Nevertheless, more than half the dependent children in the United States are in institutions. Within recent years, however, tremendous strides have been made in the improvement of standards of care, in training personnel, and in the adoption of case work methods. Many of the organizations and agencies still maintaining institutions are at the same time carrying out an increasing number of foster home placements. The Child Welfare League of America, the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, and other research organizations have carried out studies of the effects of institutional care, and have as a result drawn

⁵ For information concerning the number of children provided for under different types of care see: *The placing of children in families*, Vol. 2, and Lundberg, Emma O. *Child dependency in the United States*. New York 1933.

up lists of minimum standards.⁶ The Bureau of Jewish Social Research and the National Conference of Catholic Charities have also sought to stimulate better social work standards and practices.

In Europe, the war of 1914-8 greatly increased the number of dependent children. At the same time it reduced charitable and religious resources to such an extent that it threw heavy burdens on taxing bodies, both for direct care of a large number of children, and for the provision of subsidies for many of the private institutions and agencies working in the field.

In France, the system of public care, dating back to the time of Napoleon, maintains dependent children in boarding family homes, and thus supplements the work of Churches, foundling asylums, and orphanages. The majority of the war orphans have been provided for on the same general plan of family home care. In 1922 Germany established youth councils, representing a unit or a group of units of local government, which act as the guardians of dependent children. It is the duty of a council to act as link between the child and other persons or organizations having responsibility for the child. In Germany the majority of dependent children are provided for in institutions, but some foster family care has been developed to supplement institutional care. More than one-third of a million mothers are in receipt of widows' pensions.⁷

Russia delegates the care of dependent children, whose numbers were greatly increased by the famine conditions which existed in the post-war period, to the commissariats of health and education, which until recently made most use of institutional care. There are in Russia thousands of institutions, some colonies, and a few communes, given

⁶ *Standards of foster care for children in institutions*, Child Welfare League of America Inc. New York 1937. *Handbook for the use of boards of directors, superintendents, and staffs of the institutions for dependent children*. Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labour Publication No. 170. Washington 1936.

⁷ *The placing of children in families*, Vol. 2.

over to the care of dependent children. Conditions and facilities in various parts of the country differ considerably, but throughout the work an effort has been made to avoid the mistakes of other countries. More recently, emphasis upon institutional care has been modified by a realization of the importance of the home, and of the foster home, and amending legislation has been drawn up to allow for this type of care.⁸

Coming nearer home we find that in Australia the institution still predominates, although in several States the Scottish practice of boarding out has been adopted, and is carried on under the supervision of State children's departments. Recently a beginning has been made in boarding some children with their mothers, and in providing widows' pensions.

In New Zealand, so far as can be ascertained,⁹ the first legal enactment touching upon the care of the dependent child was the *Neglected and Criminal Children's Act*, 1867. Under the provisions of this Act the Superintendent of any province in New Zealand was authorized to establish 'separate industrial schools for males and females exclusively', where children under the age of fifteen years could be committed. Until 1880 these schools were under the control of the Justice Department, but they were then transferred to the jurisdiction of the Education Department. There were then eleven industrial schools and orphanages that were maintained wholly or in part out of votes of the General Assembly. In 1885 the cost of maintenance of children in orphanages was transferred from the Government to local Hospital and Charitable Aid Boards, and the Education Department no longer referred to orphanages in its annual reports.

Under the *Industrial Schools Acts* of 1882 and 1884,

⁸ *Ibid.* 167 f.

⁹ Beck J. Article 'The development of child welfare' in *Fifty years of national education in New Zealand*. Wellington 1928.

Butchers, A. G. *The education system of New Zealand*. Auckland 1932.

the functions of the industrial school were extended to provide for the boarding out or extra-mural method of dealing with children who were under State care. In the year 1900 the whole industrial school organization was reviewed and some important changes were effected in the direction of providing for the expansion of the boarding out system, the separation of the sexes, and the establishment for the more difficult types of children of reformatories as distinct from industrial schools.

The passing of the *Child Welfare Act* in 1925, which authorized the setting up of a special branch of the Education Department to be known as the Child Welfare Branch, marked the beginning of a new era in the development of State child welfare work. The Act was designed to make better provision with respect to the maintenance, care, and control of children who were specially under the care of the State, and to provide generally for the protection and training of indigent, neglected, or delinquent children. The Act specifically adopts the principle of foster home care as that to be used in the State's provision for the children who come under its control. Part III Section 19 of the Act reads as follows:

Children not to be permanently maintained in institutions, save in exceptional cases—Children committed to the Superintendent [of the Child Welfare Branch] pursuant to this Act, or in respect of whom the Superintendent assumes control by agreement as hereinbefore in this Act provided, shall not, save in exceptional cases to be determined by the Superintendent, be permanently maintained in any institution under the Act.

The *Child Welfare Act* was passed after a visit to the United States of America and Canada by the then Head of the Industrial Schools section of the Education Department, Mr. J. Beck,¹⁰ and was greatly influenced by American practices. The following recommendations, among

¹⁰ *Child Welfare in the United States of America and Canada*. Report of a visit of the Superintendent, Child Welfare Branch, Education Department. Special Reports on Educational Subjects, No. 15. Wellington 1927.

others submitted immediately upon Mr. Beck's return, were embodied in the *Child Welfare Act*, 1925: (1) the establishment of Children's Courts, with provision for the appointment of Associates and of Child Welfare Officers of both sexes; (2) the repeal of the Industrial Schools Act and the elimination of the term 'industrial school' altogether from the child welfare programme; (3) the creation of a separate branch of the Department to be known as the Child Welfare Branch, with provision for a Superintendent, who would act as legal guardian of all State children. It was further recommended *inter alia* that provision be made for: (1) the registration and inspection of private institutions for children; (2) the training of social workers; (3) facilities for the psychological examination of certain children. Legislation providing for the registration and inspection of private institutions was introduced in the *Child Welfare Amendment Act*, 1927.

One method of caring for dependent children is for the community to establish a pension system, which will enable widows to maintain their homes and keep their children. Widows' pensions were introduced in New Zealand in 1912, the allowance being £12 a year for a widow with one child under fourteen, increased by £6 a year for each child up to and including the fourth. Various changes in rates of payment were made from time to time; for instance in 1924 the pension was £52 for a widow with one child, and £26 for each additional child, irrespective of the number.¹¹ There were no orphans' pensions as such, but there was provision for the continuance of the children's allowance if the widow died. Orphans' pensions were first introduced by the *Social Security Act* of 1938, a payment of £39 a year being made to the guardian of an orphan.¹² By this Act, too,

¹¹ See *New Zealand Official Year-Book* 1940, 621.

¹² There are various qualifications to be made in matters of detail regarding pensions. See *Year-Book* 1941, 543-4.

the widows' pension was made £65 a year, the allowance for each child after the first remaining at £26. In May 1942 a bonus of five per cent was added to these allowances on account of increases in the cost of living.

Obviously there must be many dependent children receiving State support from these pension schemes, but there is no record of the number. The annual report of the Social Security Department gives the number of orphans' benefits as 330 for the year ending 31 March 1940, but no figures are given for the number of widows' children receiving benefit. (There were 10,174 persons receiving widows' benefits.) Some of the children receiving orphans' benefits are known to be in denominational institutions, but there is no information to be had about the actual number, or about the number of institutional children who as widows' children receive an allowance. It is clear, however, that the passing of the *Social Security Act* has made no appreciable difference to the number of dependent children in private institutions. The figures given in Departmental reports were 2,989, 3,045, and 2,973, at 31 December in each of the years 1937, 1938, and 1939.

As has been shown earlier, State care of dependent children in New Zealand is given almost wholly through foster homes, to most of which payment is made. There is an increasing tendency in nearly every country in the world for the State to adopt the practice of boarding out in lieu of institutional care. This is now coming to be true even of Russia, in which the policy of socialization has hitherto favoured institutional care. The official view of the New Zealand Education Department is clearly put¹³ in the statement of the Superintendent of the Child Welfare Branch (then Mr. J. Beck) for the year ended 31 March 1937:

With over half a century of experience behind it, and having in mind also the experience of other countries, the

¹³ *A. to J. E.*-4, 1937, 3-4. Similar statements are to be found in earlier reports, e.g. in that for 1900.

Department can say unhesitatingly that this system of placement is the best for those normal children who for one reason or another have no homes of their own. There is abundant evidence to prove the beneficent results which as a general rule attend such placement. . . . The outstanding features of this system are that the children attend the public school and grow up as ordinary members of the community, and make contacts with their fellows that last them through life.

On the other hand the religious and other private bodies have specialized in institutional care. In the first place the element of cost per child has not concerned them much; if it had they would have discovered that foster home care invariably costs less per child than does institutional care. Naturally those homes that are heavily endowed feel no necessity to reduce expenditure to a minimum, and some of them have been left money on the strict condition that it is to be used in the building and maintaining of a particular type of institution. Furthermore, there is a strong feeling on the part of the religious organizations that in an orphanage the children are under better control, and that it is, therefore, possible to give them a better foundation of moral and spiritual training. As one organization put it: 'We would again submit that we are in a position to give unfortunate children as happy an environment and a better moral and religious training than that received by a large number of those under the boarding out system'. Again, there is something tangible about a building, and a group of children, that makes an irresistible appeal to the hearts of many people. It is more difficult to raise sympathy and funds for work that is not easily seen.

The development of the work of the private organizations in New Zealand may be illustrated by reference to the history of the social services of the Presbyterian Church. Dr. J. R. Elder, tracing the development of the social services of the Presbyterian Church in New Zea-

land¹⁴, states that it was not until the opening of the present century that social services became a definitely organized department of church activity. Although the times were relatively prosperous, there was a heavy drain on both public and private charitable resources and it was thought in some quarters that too much aid was being given, and that it was not being given with sufficient discrimination. The formation of social service associations was an attempt to put the whole business on a better footing.

Of the need for more adequate provision for homeless children there can be no doubt. For example, between 1903 and 1907, 9,000 married men died leaving 8,200 children under the age of fifteen. There was, too, the question of providing for illegitimate children. Yet only four asylums existed for destitute children, one maintained by a District Hospital Board, one by the Church of England, and two by the Roman Catholic Church. To help meet the need the Presbyterian Church formed in the four main centres Presbyterian Social Service Associations.

At the first meeting of the Otago Presbyterian Social Service Association it was decided that the objective was 'to rescue those Presbyterian children who were drifting beyond the care of the Church', a purpose that was to be achieved in various ways. Men and lads were to be assisted to find employment; an attempt was to be made to solve family difficulties; orphanages were to be provided for younger children; and the problem of the juvenile delinquent was to be tackled. Immediate action was necessary for two reasons. First, two Sisters of the Church as a result of their close contact with cases of distress had gathered a number of children into their own living-rooms and evidently more suitable conditions were needed. Second, the Presbyterian Social Service Association became aware that a sum of money had been bequeathed for

¹⁴Elder, J. R. *History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand*. Christchurch 1940.

the purpose of founding a Presbyterian orphanage. Arrangements were therefore set in train for the purchase of suitable buildings, and for the formal establishment of two orphanages, one for boys and one for girls.

About this time—in the first two decades of the present century—most of the Churches began to take a new or an enlivened interest in orphanage work. A very considerable number of children's homes were built, and the number has been increased steadily, until today there are eighty-five such homes registered under the *Child Welfare Act*. The homes listed according to their denominational affiliation are recorded as follows:¹⁵ Church of England, 20; Roman Catholic, 12; Salvation Army, 14; Presbyterian, 17; Methodist, 4; Baptist, 1; Brethren, 1; Masonic, 2; undenominational, 14. The total number of children of all ages being cared for in these homes at 31 December 1940 was 2,854. It is difficult to interpret accurately the published figures, as the turnover in some homes, such as maternity, babies', and convalescent, is very high in proportion to the actual number in residence on 31 December each year. Thus the admissions to all the homes for the year 1939 are given as 2,613 (the numbers admitted are not reported for 1940), with the actual numbers in the homes on 31 December that year as 2,973.

The factors that affect the ebb and flow of admissions to the children's homes are somewhat elusive. At first sight it would seem natural to expect that during depression years there would be greater demand for admissions, but in New Zealand, as elsewhere, such is not the case. An account of the work of one social service association for the year 1938 outlines its experience as follows:

In our report of 1933 (one of the worst depression years in New Zealand) we pointed out that the committee was concerned about the cause of the decrease of applications for admissions to our homes, in view of the fact that there were

¹⁵A list of the homes has as a rule been given in *A. to J. E.*-4 each year. The latest list, however, is that published in 1939 for the previous year.

as many orphans and more distress in those years of depression. This experience was shared by all other institutions throughout the Dominion. Today the position is reversed. Times are better and applications are more plentiful. The natural inference from this experience is that in times of depression many people are ready to take in children to board, who in times of prosperity do not want them. Children catered for in this spirit cannot have the environment that is best for their moral and spiritual well-being.¹⁶

Whether or not the above interpretation is the right one, the writer is not prepared to say. The fact remains that in more prosperous times there are more applications for admission.

As an example of the way in which some of the more heavily endowed institutions have come into being, the will of one of those who have left large sums of money to found children's homes may be summarized. The will set up trustees who were authorized to build an orphanage in which children of all races and creeds born or domiciled in New Zealand were to be cared for, the stipulation being made that the children must be trained in the doctrines and disciplines of the donor's particular denomination. The primary object was 'to succour, help, comfort, maintain, educate, and advance in life to the uttermost' any eligible child committed to the care of the trustees. Provision was to be made in the main for destitute orphans, but any orphan, whether destitute or not, could be cared for if the welfare of the child would be served by providing such care. Furthermore, 'instead of caring for, maintaining and educating in the orphanage' any children eligible for admission to the orphanage, the trustees were authorized to board out such children either with their own surviving parents or other approved persons. The children might also be trained and instructed in any trade or occupation, or provision made for the training and education of any needy child whether in the

¹⁶ *The Outlook*. 30 November 1938.

orphanage or boarded out. Authority was also given for the appointment of an officer whose duty it should be to investigate cases of distress where children were concerned. This is a particularly generous and far-sighted will. Nevertheless, although considerable pressure was brought to bear on the trustees at the time to refrain from tying up the greater part of their funds in an orphanage, but rather to do some adventurous experimental work in the field of child care, bricks and mortar won the day, and at the present time the trustees are simply administering another orphanage.

The will of another person who left money to found a large children's home stipulated that no child cared for by the institution should go beyond the primary school. The home was taken over by a religious body which faithfully carries out the injunction. Still another will required that the children should wear straw hats with bands bearing the name of their benefactress. The clause was deleted, however, upon application being made to the Supreme Court.

Standards and Objectives

SO FAR THERE has been in New Zealand no attempt by the organizations caring for dependent children either to draw up or to agree upon standards with regard to buildings and equipment or social work practice. The Child Welfare Branch has a few general regulations and rules that are applied to the institutions, and since 1927 plans of new buildings must be approved by it, but otherwise there are few if any guides as to what ought to be expected of a child-caring organization. In this chapter an attempt is made to draw up a list of standards applicable to New Zealand conditions. No set of rules will cover every situation, and it is impossible to lay down absolute standards, but there is a very great need for a formulation of objectives, by which the work of the various institutions may be measured, and future developments guided.

Before proceeding further it may be as well to seek to forestall the criticism that the standards suggested are utopian and impossible of attainment. Admittedly many of them would be very difficult to achieve, and others could not be reached all at once. But this is not by any means to concede that there should be any slackening in the effort to attain them. And, if there be any who maintain that the standards are too high, the onus surely rests upon them to justify some lower

ideal than that which is put forward here. It should be said also that the recommendations in the rest of this chapter are made with the knowledge that many of the practices suggested are already followed at least in part in a number of homes; and, further, that if equally exacting standards were applied to other institutions, for example, State receiving homes, schools or ordinary family homes, many grave shortcomings would doubtless be revealed.

What follows is by no means original. It draws heavily on relevant literature published overseas, and especially on a booklet issued in 1935 by the New York State Department of Public Welfare. A fuller description of this and other source materials will be found at the end of the chapter. On the other hand, much of what has been borrowed has been adapted to make it conform to New Zealand conditions and habits of thought. It is hoped that the result is at least a first step in the direction of formulating standards that will in time come to be generally agreed upon.

BEFORE BUILDING A CHILDREN'S HOME

The first requisite in the planning of a children's home is to secure the facts concerning the need for such an institution. At the present time there are a number of homes that have been established without adequate previous information as to the need for them, and the place they could expect to fill in the child-caring programme of the community. No good business man would invest money in a manufacturing or commercial enterprise without a careful study of the requirements and possibilities of the project. Nevertheless, large sums of money are sometimes invested in children's homes by otherwise thoughtful persons, without sufficiently exhaustive inquiries having been made concerning the need for that

particular investment or the possibility of placing it better elsewhere.

Every community should have a child-caring programme and each organization and institution should have a defined place in that programme, so that duplication of services will be avoided on the one hand, and the neglect of certain needs prevented on the other. Good work with children depends on the conservation of family life, and it is better to create organizations that will seek to prevent child dependency than to care for children who have become dependent because such social machinery is lacking. It is generally recognized that aid to widowed mothers, better wages, workman's compensation, and community care of families in trouble or distress as well as other improvements in the conditions of social life, serve to reduce the amount of child dependency, and, therefore, the need for new children's homes. The community with a well-developed social welfare programme will consequently have little need of new or larger institutions for children.

PLANNING THE INSTITUTION

If a new institution is finally decided upon, or if the rebuilding of an old one seems desirable, the sponsors should do more than merely consult experts; they should be sure to visit other outstanding institutions of various types, especially the more progressive.

The site should be chosen with a number of requirements in mind. Not only must the size of the tract of land, its soil, its drainage and water supply be considered, but its accessibility to schools, churches, physicians, and hospitals be taken into account. It is better to put children's homes sufficiently near to cities and towns to enable the children and staff to participate readily in community activities than to place them in the open country. The ideal site is one that is sufficiently suburban to permit

free outdoor life, that provides ample space for playgrounds, gardens, and pets, and that, yet, because of its accessibility to the resources of a town or a city, discourages the tendency for 'Home' children to become an isolated group, who are unprepared for later life in a normal community.

What type of buildings should be constructed? There is little doubt that in New Zealand the most satisfactory type of construction is the one-storey cottage building, equipped to house fifteen to twenty children. The small cottage-unit type of building has found increasing favour with child welfare workers as recognition has grown of the merits of providing dependent children with a home that in all its appointments resembles as nearly as possible a family home. If an institutional block of buildings is constructed, in years to come there will be cause for regret that the more home-like conditions of the cottage are not available. There may be certain difficulties of administration and supervision, but the advantages to the children of the cottage plan far outweigh all other considerations.

ORGANIZATION

Trustees and members of committees having control of children's institutions are responsible to the community for the maintenance of high standards of child care and for adequate interpretation of their institution to the public. Membership of such a board or committee is a high social obligation, and only those who are prepared to give devoted service should accept appointment.

The Composition of Boards or Committees and their duties. (1) Experience has shown that the board should consist of not more than fifteen members, perhaps considerably fewer, and include only those who show an active interest in the work of the organization. The members should be men and women of understanding

with broad interests in the field of social work, health, and education.

(2) Members should be elected for a limited term of office, and provision made for their replacement if inactive for a protracted period. It is preferable that one-third of the membership be elected each year.

(3) The board should select the superintendent, and with him determine the general policies of the institution and the type and scope of its work, in the light of changing community needs.

(4) The board should assume responsibility for the raising of funds, management of financial campaigns, and the securing of an annual audit by a competent accountant.

(5) Meetings should be held at least once a month to receive the reports of the superintendent, the executive committee and other committees, and to discuss and decide questions submitted by the superintendent.

(6) The presence of the superintendent should be required throughout all regular meetings of the board.

(7) The board should review its work annually to determine whether or not current policies are meeting the needs of the community. As an aid both to the community and to the institution, the board should establish a close relationship with other social agencies, the Child Welfare Branch, and other co-ordinating community groups.

(8) The members of the board should visit the institution often enough, both officially and informally, to ensure that they are fully acquainted with its conduct.

(9) The board should make regular inspections of all institutional buildings and property, taking note of necessary renewals and repairs. There should be a well-thought-out systematic plan for adding new amenities and making renovations.

(10) It should be the responsibility of the board to discuss and decide all questions of admission and discharge, and

no new cases should be accepted without being approved by the board.

PERSONNEL

The close association between the children and staff in an institution and the importance of example and indirect leadership make it imperative that in the selection of staff the first considerations should be character and proved capacity in the care of children. In addition members of staff should have good health, emotional stability, a sense of humour, intellectual balance, and an appreciation of spiritual values.

Administrative Staff. (1) The chief executive or superintendent should be qualified by professional training and experience in the fields of social work and education. A knowledge of business administration is also desirable.

(2) He should have a genuine liking for children and an understanding of them.

(3) He should be an able administrator familiar with modern standards of child care.

(4) He should be in full charge of the management of the institution and make regular reports to the board covering all phases of the work.

(5) He should have the responsibility of employing and of discharging all members of the staff. Clearly, he should consult the matron on occasions when her advice is relevant.

(6) He should hold staff meetings at regular intervals to discuss plans and policies with his subordinates, and to consider the problems of individual children.

(7) He should see that the members of his staff have an opportunity for continued training.

(8) It is desirable in cases where the superintendent also has executive and secretarial duties that he should live within the institution grounds, and that his time be so organized that he has ample opportunity for association with the children and staff.

(9) It is not desirable that the superintendent should have the responsibility of raising funds or of canvassing his district. Wherever possible a separate canvasser should be appointed.

(10) It is seldom that husband and wife are both ideally suited for work among children, and there is always the danger that in cases of inefficiency loyalty to the life partner will tend to cover up the failings of the delinquent party. Where there are children in the family there is also the further possibility of jealousy and misunderstanding. Hence the practice of appointing the wife of the superintendent or manager to a position in the institution should as a rule be avoided.

(11) Wherever care is provided for adolescent boys a man should be in control of the institution, and should be in touch with them every day.

Matrons and Assistants. (1) Emotional balance and adaptability to the job are more important considerations than age. In general, however, it is not desirable to employ a matron or house-mother over fifty years of age, unless she has unusual qualifications and has had experience in handling children both individually and in groups.

(2) The matrons and assistant matrons should be women who have had a good general education. They should be motherly in their attitude, but should not need to satisfy their own emotions by an excessive expression of maternal impulses. They should be able to make children feel that they like them and understand them, have an appreciation of the dignity of home-making, and be good housekeepers with the ability to create a home-like atmosphere. They should be free from temperamental failings such as grouching and nagging, have a wholesome sense of humour and quick resilience, and some understanding of the modern approach to behaviour difficulties. Furthermore, if at all possible they should have had some special preparation for the work, in the way of training in home

nursing, elementary education, social work practice, and psychology.

(3) In the cottage type of institution, where accommodation permits it, a man and his wife can often give good service as cottage parents (but not as superintendent and matron), the man in some cases working outside the institution.

Other Employees. As all the staff are necessarily a part of the whole child-training plan, they should be persons of character and have a sympathetic understanding of children, as well as ability to perform the special jobs to which they are assigned.

Ratio of Staff to Children. In every instance, a careful study of the function and activity of an institution will determine whether it is understaffed or poorly staffed. Where there are a large number of young children the proportion of staff to children will of necessity be higher. A ratio of from six to ten children per staff member will usually prove adequate from the quantitative point of view, if all members of the staff are included.

Time off Duty. (1) It is essential to health and proper performance of duty that every staff member have sufficient free time for relaxation in the institution and outside; adequate holidays should be allowed.

(2) In addition to an opportunity to leave the grounds for an hour or more at least every other day, it is necessary that:

(a) Every staff member who is intimately concerned with supervision of children should have one and a half days off each week. This might be arranged in three half-day instalments.

(b) Other staff members should have at least a full day free from duty each week.

(c) Staff members—administrative and others—who deal directly with children should have a month's vacation each year.

(d) One relief worker should be available for each group of five (or fewer) house-mothers or group supervisors to allow opportunity for free time.

PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Grounds. (1) The grounds should be kept clean and made attractive with appropriate landscaping.

(2) Adequate playground space and individual equipment for different age-groups should be provided. It should include paved space for rainy weather as well as suitable space for group games. It is estimated that for institutions housing 100 children or less recreation space should be provided on the basis of about 600 square feet per child.

Buildings. (1) Wherever possible buildings should be constructed of fire-resisting materials, and should be planned for convenience and ease of management, and with an eye to the elimination of waste spaces.

(2) Durability, simplicity, and home-like qualities are primary considerations. Decorations in attractive colour combinations are important.

(3) Every precaution against fire risk must be taken, and fire regulations with respect to fire-escapes and fire-extinguishers should be obeyed implicitly.

Dormitories. (1) In dormitories there should be at least three feet between beds, and 600 cubic feet of air space for each child. It is desirable that dormitories should be ventilated from two or three sides, and that the windows should be located and constructed to provide upper and cross ventilation.

(2) A single metal bed with spring wire mattress and a firm, well-stuffed flock or other mattress should be provided for each child. Sufficient blankets should be provided for all children to maintain adequate warmth. For children under eighteen months and for those with enuresis mattresses should be covered by a moisture-proof material.

Sheets and pillow slips should be changed at least once a week.

(3) Dormitories should be made attractive and home-like with window curtains, bed-spreads, bedside rugs, pictures on the walls, chairs, and some place where the children's treasures and better toys can be kept in view.

(4) Large dormitories should be divided into small units to care for not more than eight children, whenever the demands of lighting, ventilation, and fire-exits allow of such construction. Individual cubicles for adolescent boys and girls are almost essential. If dwarf partitions cannot be fitted, individuals can sometimes be separated by the use of curtains.

(5) The bedroom of the person who is responsible for the night supervision of children in each dormitory should open directly into it.

Bath, Toilet, and Drinking Facilities. (1) Toilet, bathing, and drinking facilities should be sufficient in number. There should be a toilet, bathing, and washing unit adjacent to each dormitory. In the unit there should be one toilet for every eight or ten children, and one bowl with hot and cold water for every four children. Group showers may be provided for boys, and individual shower-baths for girls over ten years of age. In addition bath-tubs in individual compartments should be provided. Drinking fountains on the dormitory floor may be in the wash-room or in a hall adjacent to the dormitory.

(2) Adequate toilet and washing facilities with easy access from playgrounds and play-rooms should also be provided.

(3) Bath-rooms and wash-rooms should be large enough to permit of ample room for dressing, and also of wall space for enough towel railing to hang each towel separately. A hygienic tooth-brush rack should also be provided.

Lockers and Storage Space. (1) Individual lockers or chests of drawers adjacent to the wash-room should be provided for children's clothing, and it is preferable that

lockers, dormitories, and wash-rooms be in close proximity. Additional individual lockers or other adequate provision should be made for the child's personal belongings either in the living-room or play-room.

(2) There should be ample storage space for linen, clothing, and bedding etc., when not in use.

Sewing-room. A sewing-room should be part of each cottage, and should not encroach upon the quarters of children or staff.

Living-rooms. (1) Living-rooms should be furnished in good taste with durable but comfortable furniture, colourful curtains, rugs, specially selected pictures, and plants and flowers. Pianos and radios help to create a home-like atmosphere, and add to the enjoyment of the children.

(2) In large institutions not of the cottage type, living-rooms should, if possible, be adjacent to the dormitories and be planned to accommodate groups of not more than thirty.

Study and Library Facilities. (1) Space should be provided which will permit children to study without interfering with the indoor play of others. This may require some ingenuity in the use of available space in the living, dining, and reception rooms.

(2) There should be a well-equipped library in every institution, and provision should be made in the budget for annual additions and renewals. Children should also be encouraged to use public libraries.

Dining-rooms, Kitchens, and Laundries. (1) The dining-room should be attractive, well-lighted and ventilated, and located conveniently to the kitchen. Equipment in the dining-room should as nearly as possible approximate that used in an average family home.

(2) Large dining-rooms should be divided to contain groups of not more than forty children, and each table should accommodate not more than eight. Linen table-cloths are not desirable for daily use unless they can be

changed at least every other day. Wooden tables covered with a heat- and water-resistant varnish can be made very attractive. It is desirable that table-cloths be used occasionally, and that formal meals of the usual courses be served from time to time, to accustom the children to the graces of dining-room service. Serviettes should always be supplied.

(3) Dishes should be attractive and durable, but should not be selected from the standpoint of durability alone. The proper dishes for each course should be provided. A set of dishes should include a dinner plate, a dessert plate, a bread and butter plate, and a soup plate. In addition there should be fruit dishes, a cup and saucer, a glass (water and milk should be served in glasses rather than in cups), table knife, bread and butter knife, fork, dessert spoon, and teaspoon.

(4) Staff members should take at least one meal every day with the children.

(5) Kitchens should be clean, sanitary, and well-ventilated. The kitchen should be properly equipped, and labour-saving devices such as potato and vegetable peelers should be used when the size of the institution warrants it. Adequate provision should be made for sinks and sink-top space. Kitchens should be well-lighted by both natural and artificial light, and should be planned so that all facilities are conveniently placed.

(6) Refrigerator space is almost essential. Clean, well-ventilated, and well-lighted storage space should also be located near the kitchen. Properly ventilated rooms should also be provided for the storage of fruits and vegetables.

(7) Laundries should be carefully planned, supplied with ample hot water, and equipped with electric washing-machines. Properly heated drying-rooms should be provided, and mangle type electric ironing machines are almost a necessity.

Staff Quarters. Staff quarters should be roomy, allow for privacy, and be attractively furnished.

Health Facilities. Space should be provided for a health unit to include an infirmary with one bed for every twenty children in the institution (in cottage institutions space outside the regular cottages should be provided), an isolation room for contagious and infectious suspects, and a clinic or treatment room for first aid and physical examination.

Recreation Rooms. (1) Play-rooms in addition to living-rooms should be provided for small and large groups. (2) A well-equipped gymnasium or ample indoor space for active games is almost a necessity.

Lighting, Ventilation, and Heating. (1) The arrangement for both natural and artificial lighting, especially where children study, read, or sew, must be such as to prevent eye-strain.

(2) The windows should be located and constructed so as to provide upper and cross ventilation.

(3) Heating arrangements should be such as to ensure comfort under all weather conditions.

Clothing and Personal Possessions. (1) Every child should have an adequate supply of clothing plainly marked with his name or identification.

(2) There should be no uniformity of dress, but well-fitting clothes similar in style and quality to those worn by children of average homes in the community should be provided. Differences in style and in colour prevent monotony and develop a greater interest in care of the person.

(3) Clothes should be provided according to the season. Warm outdoor garments and appropriate footwear should be supplied for the winter.

(4) As far as possible children should be allowed to select their own clothes. Used clothing should be renovated, cleaned, and pressed before being passed on to another child.

(5) Particular attention should be paid to the proper fitting of shoes and stockings. Shoes must be kept in good repair, and should not be worn by others when outgrown. Second-hand shoes should never be used.

(6) When a child is discharged he should have an adequate wardrobe. When children do not return to relatives but go to some employment they should have sufficient clothing to carry them over a period of several months.

(7) It is desirable to keep a record on file of all clothing given to each child during his stay in the institution.

HEALTH

Medical Care. (1) Every institution should appoint a physician whose duty it should be not only to care for the sick, but also to keep the children healthy. It is always desirable that the services of the physician should be paid for, rather than that they should be gratuitous. He should be on call at all times, but if his institution has more than twenty-five children he should visit it at least once a week.

(2) An institution having fifty or more children should have a registered nurse in residence. In smaller institutions there should be someone with experience to deal with emergencies until the physician arrives, and to care for children with minor ailments. Cases of serious illness should be sent to hospital.

(3) Accurate and thorough physical examinations should be given on admission and at least every six months.

(4) The eyes of every child should be tested on admission and the physician should take into consideration the advisability of other tests, and of vaccination and immunization against diphtheria.

(5) Continuous health records should be kept for each child, including a record of examinations, tests, treatment, and other medical attention. A record should also be kept of all illnesses, injuries, and minor ailments.

(6) Children should be weighed at least four times a year and measured twice yearly.¹

(7) The dentist or dental nurse should examine the teeth of each child at least every six months.

(8) Instruction in health education should include: (a) sound health information; (b) adequate health practices; (c) instruction in the prevention and spread of communicable diseases.

(9) Every staff member should be given a thorough physical examination at the time of employment, and every year thereafter. Examinations may be given by the institution physician, or records submitted to him by staff members testifying that examinations have been made by their own physicians.

General Health Principles. (1) Children under eight years of age should have sleeping-quarters separate from the older children. Preschool children should have a daily rest in bed of not less than one hour. Children under fourteen need at least ten hours sleep, and those over fourteen at least nine hours. Separate sleeping-quarters should be provided for those children whose health or personal habits might prove detrimental to the group.

(2) Thorough washing before meals should be established as a practice.

(3) Teeth should be brushed at least twice a day.

(4) A complete bath or shower with warm water twice a week or more often is essential. Children should be bathed in small groups at night, under adequate supervision.

(5) Each child should have at least two clean towels a week and there should be individual wash-cloths.

(6) Heads should be inspected at least once a week, and should be thoroughly washed every two weeks, or more frequently. Hair-cuts should not be uniform and should be as good as those given by barbers outside the institution.

¹ See Somerset, H. C. D., *Child nutrition in a rural community*, for confirmation of the importance of this item.

(7) Underclothing and stockings should be changed at least twice a week, and more often if necessary to guarantee cleanliness.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

(1) Meals should be balanced to take account of nutritional value, variety, flavour, and quality, and be so planned that the children do not know from day to day what will be served.

(2) Consideration should be given to the dietary needs of various age-groups, and children persistently underweight or overweight should be given appropriate treatment.

(3) Whole milk, fruits, vegetables, cereals, and eggs or meat should be the foundation of meals. Coffee, tea, fried food, and pastries should not be given to the younger children, and served sparingly, if at all, to the older ones. An overloading of starches should be avoided.

(During a recent survey of the county child-caring institutions in the State of Connecticut, U.S.A., the State Health Department drew up a list of 'certain items of basic information' concerning nutritional values and standards which is given on p. 40.)

(4) Sugar should be provided as far as possible in the form of fruit, honey, syrup, and occasional sweets, instead of in excessive amounts of refined sugar and jams.

(5) Food should be served in tempting, attractive, and palatable form. The interval between the serving of the food and the beginning of the meal should be reduced to a minimum so that hot food may be served hot.

(6) Consideration should be given not only to the food that is served, but to what the children actually eat.

(7) Extra food should be furnished for those who require it, but in a manner that will not make the child an object of undue attention.

(8) The staff should not eat food different from that given to the children when seated at the same table with them.

(9) Conversation during meals should be encouraged.

(10) Where there is not a trained dietitian on the staff, menus should be submitted for criticism at least every six months to an outside expert.

Items of Information on Nutritional Values

(a) Total calories must be sufficient to maintain weight. These are supplied by all foods in a mixed diet and especially by breads, cereals, and fats.

(b) From 10 to 15 per cent of total calories should be supplied by protein, the best sources of which are milk, eggs, cheese, meat, peas and beans, breads and cereals. As animal proteins are biologically more complete than those from plant sources, some of these are needed daily to increase the value of proteins from breads, cereals, and vegetables.

(c) Such mineral elements as calcium, phosphorus, and iron—one gram each of the two former, and 15 milligrams of iron—are needed daily by growing children. Milk is the richest source of calcium and one quart (4 cups) daily for each child will supply the needed amount of both calcium and phosphorus. Milk is low in iron, but eggs, especially the yolks, and all green vegetables are rich in iron and should be used liberally. Fruits are also valuable sources of mineral elements and the dried fruits are especially rich in iron.

(d) Vitamins A, B, C, and D must be furnished daily to promote growth and maintain health. The richest sources of A are whole milk, butter, cream, liver, green leafy vegetables and yolks of eggs. The richest sources of B are milk, vegetables, both greens and root, fruits, cereals and breads—whole grain especially. The richest sources of C are the citrus fruits, quickly cooked green vegetables, tomatoes both raw and canned, and raw fruits and vegetables. As vitamin C is easily destroyed by heating there should be some raw fruit or vegetable in the diet daily. The richest sources of D are cod-liver or other fish oils, egg yolks, and exposure to sunlight out-of-doors.

(e) Food should supply a certain amount of roughage so that cathartics will not be needed as a routine measure. Vegetables and fruits and coarse cereals and breads aid in this.

(f) Food should be of good quality and prepared carefully so that it will be appetizing.

(g) Daily menus should be well balanced to supply the essential foods, and varied from week to week to avoid monotony.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Staff-Child Relationships.*² (1) A sympathetic attitude on the part of the staff towards the individual needs of children is an important condition of sound social development.

(2) Interest in children and their activities and tolerance and understanding with emphasis on treatment rather than on punitive measures are essential.

(3) Standards and ideals put before the children should be within their comprehension and capacity to attain.

(4) The failures and inconsistencies of childhood should be patiently and constructively dealt with.

(5) Children's judgments and opinions should be respected and the relationship between staff and children should allow of free speech amongst them.

(6) The relationship between staff and children should be such as to foster a sense of common pride in the home.

(7) Routine requirements of the institution should be interpreted to children and they in turn should, as a means of developing initiative and co-operation, be encouraged to suggest improvements in the management or programme.

Internal Government. (1) The atmosphere of the institution like that of normal family life should be one of ease, reasonable freedom, and self-expression. This in itself acts as a stimulus to desirable conduct.

(2) If any system of giving marks for behaviour is used it should take account of the following: (a) Things done well should receive as much recognition as lapses. (b) Each child's marks should be considered from time to time to discover whether or not the system has the desired effects on his behaviour. (c) Systems of marks should not be the only ways of obtaining desirable conduct. Such a system should be employed as a means to an end, rather than as an

²A booklet published by the Child Welfare League of America, Inc., entitled *Manual for cottage mothers in institutions* (New York 1932), will be found to be helpful in this connection.

end in itself, looking toward the time when the staff is sufficiently trained and experienced to make unnecessary rewards and punishments on a comparatively artificial basis.

(3) Financial responsibility should be taught through opportunities given in the earning and spending of money.

(4) Attention should be given to table manners, the proper use of English, personal appearance, and general behaviour.

(5) All activities should be directed toward an increasingly mature social outlook and adult type of behaviour. These may be developed to some extent through table conversations, discussion of current topics and social problems, and by the introduction of some system of self-government.

(6) The various age and special interest groups to which children naturally attach themselves in an institution can, under adequate leadership, contribute a great deal to their individual development. Some children who respond poorly to adult authority will co-operate readily with the group of which they are a part. Every group, therefore, should maintain as high a level of conduct as possible.

Individual Development Through Social Activities. (1) Individual and group activities of various types are effective vehicles of habit training. One of their greatest values is that they furnish a happy and natural atmosphere in which children are more apt to learn desirable modes of conduct.

(2) There should be many organized activities and games in an institution so that a child may learn the give and take of group life.

(3) There should always be scope for choice in the selection of hobbies and clubs, and in participation in community affairs.

(4) Children should have full and varied opportunities to develop their interests in reading, music (both vocal and instrumental), dramatics, handicraft, and other

manual work. A wide choice should be given so that they may express individual tastes and aptitudes.

(5) Children should take part in the social activities of groups not belonging to the institution.

(6) The use of children in concerts and other activities for the purpose of raising funds for the institution should be discouraged, as should also the fêting of institutional children by various associations and clubs.

(7) Associations should be maintained with the child's own family as much as possible through visits to home and relatives.

(8) As soon as possible children should be allowed to go to and from the institution alone as they would in private homes.

(9) Special attention should be given to the discovery of the causes of perplexing and unusual behaviour, such as persistent stealing, running away, enuresis, and serious rebellion, and all possible constructive measures for treatment should be employed. Whenever possible expert help should be enlisted in such cases.

General Leisure Time Programme. (1) Except in inclement weather children attending school should have at least one hour of outdoor play every day, including both active group play and free undirected play. Time for free play indoors should also be provided. Children not of school age should be outdoors as much as possible.

(2) Durable equipment for indoor and outdoor group and individual play should be carefully selected. Each child should possess some toys or equipment for use at his own discretion, such as dolls, games, and athletic material. There are a number of recreational activities such as tramps, trips to museums and parks, or attendance at concerts, that require no equipment, and can be used to real advantage. A well-equipped gymnasium and a swimming pool are decided assets. Swings, slides, and see-saws are needed for younger children, but become tiresome

when nothing else is provided. Special equipment for active games such as football, tennis, and ping-pong is a reasonable requirement for any child-caring institution.

(3) There should be one person in the institution in charge of recreation. It should be his or her responsibility to see that all groups have the opportunity to participate in some organized activity. Household and other activities should not interfere with recognized play periods.

METHODS OF CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE

The institution that carries out careful and effective methods of classification, treats each child as an individual, and organizes a constructive and interesting social and recreational programme will have comparatively little difficulty in maintaining adequate control and discipline. In instances which seem to demand the use of specific measures of a negative nature, such as deprivation of privileges, or occasional corporal punishment, the following principles should be observed.³

- (1) In the deprivation of privileges careful distinction should be made between rights and privileges. Three nourishing meals a day, adequate sleep, opportunity to see parents and friends at the institution, some free time each day for recreation, the maintenance and development of health, access at all reasonable times to the superintendent, are rights which must not under any conditions be denied a child, no matter how recalcitrant he may be. Privileges may be defined as such extras as moving pictures, trips to neighbouring towns and cities, and other special treats such as an ordinary family would indulge in.
- (2) Privileges cannot be denied fairly unless the institution furnishes a considerable number of them.
- (3) While it is desirable to delegate certain responsibilities to children in accordance with the principles of some form

³ For a somewhat different but excellent approach to the question of discipline see the section on 'Discipline' in *Handbook for Institutions*, 81 f.

of self-government, it is essential that careful adult supervision be given so that children do not abuse this authority. This applies especially to the use of the monitor system, and the supervision of younger groups by older children.

(4) Punishments should always be thought of in terms of treatment, the purpose of which is to change the attitude of the children as well as their conduct. It is obvious that a permanent change of attitude cannot take place in a child unless treatment is based upon absolute fairness, some knowledge of the causes operating, and an honest desire to help the offender to master his difficulties.

(5) Because of the potential dangers involved, the type, frequency, and methods of administering corporal punishment should be studied carefully. The public are prone to overestimate the part corporal punishment plays in an institution, while many board members and some superintendents are apt to underestimate both its extent and its subtler consequences. Although it is effective with some children at certain times, if administered with poise and good judgment, on the whole its indiscriminate use indicates a lack of resourcefulness and leadership on the part of the administration and the staff. If it is used at all, it should be based on full knowledge of the conduct and social background of the child, and with the full knowledge and consent of the superintendent. Every instance of corporal punishment should be carefully recorded with the name of the child, type and form of punishment, reasons for its use, and reaction of the child to the experience. A report of all such punishment should be presented regularly to the governing board.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL TRAINING

The natural starting point and the surest foundation for moral instruction is the religious feeling of the child. Early in childhood nearly all children learn of a supreme being called God, and that in some way or other He is concerned

with their conduct and welfare. Whether their relation to God is chiefly that of love depends upon their early training. It is the privilege and responsibility of those into whose care children have been given to seek through training and example to lead them into such a relationship with God that their early impressions of Him will draw them to Him as Father, Teacher, and Friend, one whom they would like to please. Upon members of the staff there often devolves the double duty of being parent and teacher, and in many cases the religious life of the children will depend to a large extent upon the quality of the staff member's own spiritual experience. 'Feed my lambs' is a command which those in charge of an institution for children cannot afford to take lightly.

The religious training of the children must be carried out in such a way that there will be no disharmony between their religious life and their everyday experience with members of the staff and with one another. It is only as they come to regard their life in the institution with feelings of joy and satisfaction, and come to be aware of that sense of security which grows out of the experience of being loved and respected that their religious training and worship will be meaningful to them either at the moment or later on in life.

Religious Instruction. (1) It is important to have a regular time and place for religious training and worship. Where used with discretion a small chapel attached to an institution can be of value.

(2) Wherever possible the children should go to the community Church and Sunday School.

(3) As a general rule prayers and worship should be brief and should be confined to one period a day, preferably after the evening meal. Too much time spent in religious exercises is harmful in its effect.

(4) Religious instruction should not be confined to the classroom but should be correlated with the child's daily life.

(5) Imagination and intelligence should be used in presenting religious truths. Drama and other methods of presentation should not be overlooked.

(6) Mechanical or rote memorizing of songs and Scripture without understanding should be avoided. But some of the fine classical expressions of the virtue of obedience (Samuel's rebuke to Saul); of patriotic devotion (the Jews' lament for Jerusalem when in captivity); of humility (prayers of the Pharisee and publican); of dependence on God (Solomon's prayer when taking over the kingdom); of personal attachment (Ruth's words to Naomi); of neighbourly kindness (story of the good Samaritan); of God's universal requirement of all men (He hath showed thee, O man, what is good . . .); and many more like them should be taught and memorized understandingly, together with other religious classics such as some of the great hymns and prayers.

(7) Older children should be given a more systematic understanding of the teaching of the Bible as a whole.⁴

Moral Training. (1) More than usual emphasis should be given to the moral training of the dependent child. He is deprived of the influence of the close ties of family, and hence must learn to rely upon himself earlier in life than is necessary for the child who lives in a normal home.⁵

(2) Moral training in an institution depends upon the atmosphere and the tone of the institution, and the relationship between the staff and the children rather than upon formal moral instruction. Play associates, example, and imitation are the great factors in moral training. Rules, regulations, and instruction in morality without experience and association with strong personalities are empty and ineffective. In order that children may have the moral training that comes through experience, an environment

⁴ Two very good books are: (a) Hall, E. F. *The presentation of the Bible to children*. London 1937. (b) Lowther Clarke, W. K. (Ed.). *The New Testament shortened*. London 1939.

⁵ See chapters on 'Habit Formation' and on 'Mental Health' in *Handbook for Institutions* for further suggestions for moral training.

rich and varied in interests and activities is necessary.

(3) Children should have as much moral freedom as they can stand, or as much as they will not seriously abuse. If their environment is so restricted that they can never make wrong choices, there is little opportunity for development of self-control and moral decision. Hence freedom to choose, accompanied by wise guidance in play, work, and school gives opportunity for that making of decisions which is indispensable to sound moral training.

(4) Self-respect must be developed in children as this quality is the best defence an individual can have against many temptations. The early experiences of many dependent children have tended to destroy self-respect and it should be the aim of the institution to rebuild it. (Suitable clothes will help.) The ability to succeed in something is essential if one is to believe in oneself. Activities at which even the dullest can excel and make a contribution to the group life must be discovered and encouraged.

(5) Some measures of self-government within the institution should be developed. Real self-government depends upon the spirit of its administration, rather than upon some form of organization. Adult guidance and not domination is involved in the best kind of moral training.

(6) It is important that children be helped to gain a healthy attitude toward sex. An atmosphere of confidence and trust between staff members and children, in which questions can be asked and honest answers given, is essential. No child should be made to feel that it is shameful or bad to want information, and older children should be given simple, helpful knowledge of their bodies. Talks on health and hygiene afford good opportunities for the giving of such information.

SOCIAL WORK OBJECTIVES

Admission. (1) Since there are children in institutions whom it would not have been necessary to accept if a

really thorough study of their needs had been made, the importance of more careful investigation before admission cannot be over-emphasized. The modern idea of child care is that a child rightfully belongs first in his own home, then with blood relations. Only as a last resort should he be permanently separated from his own kin, and placed in an institution or foster home.

(2) A clearly defined but flexible admission policy should be formulated. An evaluation of the original policies of the institution is implied here, as is also adaptation to meet changing needs in the community.

(3) It is generally agreed that poverty alone is not sufficient ground for breaking up a home and placing children in an institution.

(4) Before a child is accepted it should be clearly established that there are no community resources available to make it possible to keep him with his own family.

(5) The major responsibility for the admission of a child should rest with the whole board, after the case has been reported upon by a special sub-committee set up to deal with admissions.

(6) It is very important to have full knowledge of a child's family history before determining whether or not he is a proper subject for institutional care. Moreover, if he is accepted, intelligent training cannot be given him without adequate information concerning his family background and his own physical and mental condition. A careful investigation of all the relevant facts is required in order that a full picture may be obtained.

(7) Every institution needs a thoroughly competent field worker whose main duty it should be to investigate admissions, to keep in touch with families while children are in the institution, and to supervise those who have been discharged.

(8) When it has been decided to admit a child, a written agreement should be signed by the relatives stating the amount they will pay toward the child's support. A check

on payments should be made regularly, and it is recommended that a yearly investigation of the family's ability to pay be carried out. Parents should always be required to contribute to the board of their children to whatever extent they are able. On the other hand, undue pressure should not be brought to bear if the parents' finances do not warrant it.

Records. (1) A careful record of all facts uncovered during the investigation should be made, and the record added to from time to time, so as to keep an accurate and informative account of the development of the family situation, as well as of the progress of the child.

(2) The whole question of records and statistics in connection with the care of dependent children needs to be gone into thoroughly, and some agreement arrived at on a comprehensive system suited to New Zealand conditions.⁶

Discharge and After-care. (1) No child should be discharged until adequate investigation has been made and fitting plans for after-care formulated. Every institution has a responsibility for continued supervision either through its own field worker or through some other organization.

(2) The possibility of returning a child to his own home or to relatives should never be lost sight of. At regular intervals the situation should be reviewed.

Training Workers. The time has come when there should be a definite training scheme for workers in the field of child care. The best results are likely to be achieved if all the interested organizations co-operate in setting up one well co-ordinated scheme.

General. (1) Members of families should be kept together as far as possible, and the practice of having boys' homes and girls' homes widely separated from each other should be avoided.

(2) The fact of being a dependent provided for in an

⁶ See Lundberg, Emma O. *Child dependency in the United States.*

institution should not handicap a child's choice of vocation. The practice of limiting girls to housework and boys to farming is now indefensible. The institution authorities should make full use of any available facilities for vocational guidance and placement.

(3) No child who is capable of profiting by post-primary education should be denied further schooling.

NOTE ON SOURCE MATERIAL

An outline of practices and aims for children's institutions, recommended by the Committee on Institutions for Children of the Welfare Council of New York, has been the main source for the suggestions of this chapter. The following references have also been consulted, and in some cases suggestions from them have been incorporated:

(a) *Handbook for the use of boards of directors, superintendents, and staffs of institutions for dependent children,* Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor. (b) *Child care in institutions,* Bureau of Children, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. (c) *Child-caring institutions,* Department of Public Welfare, Ohio. (d) *Rules and regulations governing child-caring institutions,* Board of State Aid and Charities, Maryland. (e) *A health program for institutions,* Bureau of Children, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. (f) *Standards of foster care for children in institutions,* Child Welfare League of America Incorporated.

Note: Of the above, the book given under (a) is the most useful, and should be in the hands of all superintendents and board members.