THE INSTITUTIONAL CARE OF DELINQUENT, DEPENDENT, AND NEGLECTED NEGRO GIRLS IN VIRGINIA SINCE 1914

by

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CHAPTER 2

Introduction

The way to strengthen the weak is constantly to test them under favorable conditions. To change low ideas of their mutual relations into higher ones, they must be trained, not in the abstract, but in the concrete.

—Armstrong
The Institutional Care of Delinquent, Dependent, and Neglected Negro Girls in Virginia since 1914

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Importance of Problem. The problem of delinquency in general is a very pertinent one. Not only has the recent "crime wave" in the United States brought the problem of delinquency to the fore from the standpoint of public concern, but from a scientific standpoint the problem is a very live one. The recent prison mutinies, the overcrowded conditions which added to the Ohio prison horror, the discussions of crime in relation to the popular prohibition issue when added to the apparent youth of our criminal offenders, as evidenced in much popular discussion of crime, present one of the most pressing social problems with which our generation has to cope.

The established order of things in legal circles at their best certainly is not of a nature to deal sympathetically and wisely with youth. The legal mind is not one to inquire into the niceties of cause and to try to remedy the cause, dealing with the offender in a way to make him a better citizen. Re-
habilitation has never been the primary aim of our legal and penal machineries. Years of experience have shown very little, if any, result from a curative standpoint. The newer scientific approach to criminology has been popularized in Sunday supplements and feature articles which have put this approach in the category of news and probably rightly so from the standpoint of rarity. The idea that a criminal is not just a criminal to be treated purely by punitive measures is of the same type of news as is the proverbial case of the man who bit the dog. The opprobrium which has traditionally been applied to adult and child alike in a majority of instances and the old theory of punishment, "an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth", has been the philosophy of society as a whole toward those who have been caught breaking its laws.

Our society is now face to face with a new era in criminology: the era of prevention. Seemingly the best methodology lies in the field of the proper care of juvenile delinquents. Hence any properly conducted study of the care of delinquent children has scientific value even though as in many cases only purely negative conclusions can be drawn.

Delinquency Among Negroes. In his article "The Negro Criminal--a Statistical Note" Mr. Thorsten Sellin, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, says:

"Practically all writers, Negro or white, who have studied the question of Negro criminality have admitted the existence of an apparently higher crime rate for the Negro than for the white. Booker T. Washington, DuBois, Work, and others, have frankly agreed that their race has contributed a disproportionately large number of arrests, defendants, and prisoners. The same opinion has been expressed by white writers, such as Willecox, Stone, Odum, McCord, Kellar, and others, and recent
Professor Sellin points out that during the first half of 1924 the Negroes of Philadelphia who composed 7.4% of the total population according to the 1920 census, furnished 24.4% of the arrests. The same year the Negroes of Pittsburg showed an arrest rate 2.15 times as high as that of the whites. The ratio in Detroit during the first six months of 1926 was 3.99 per ten thousand Negroes as compared with 1 per ten thousand whites. Similar conditions exist in such southern states as North Carolina and Alabama as evidenced by the court records in such states. Professor Sellin concludes on page 53, "The following conclusion can be drawn from the above data. All proportions being guarded, the Negro seems to be more frequently in contact with agencies of criminal justice than the white."  

This study is no place for a discussion of causes; neither is it a place for further statistical data illustrating the criminal rate among Negroes. If the problem of delinquency is of pressing importance as it relates to the population in general that importance is greatly magnified as it relates to the Negro in particular.

**Virginia Compared With Other States.** Margaret Reeves in her recent book "Training Schools for Delinquent Girls" says on page 89:

"The eight schools caring exclusive for colored girls and having staffs composed entirely of colored workers are all situated in southern states, or where the point of view is distinctly southern. The best known is the Virginia Industrial"
School for Colored Girls of which Mrs. Janie Porter Barrett is superintendent. The quality of the work done there as a whole compares favorably of that of the best schools for white girls.¹

Mrs. Arthur P. Falconer was sent by the Fosdick Commission to investigate all the schools for delinquent girls in the United States during the World War as part of an attempt to improve conditions about the training camps. Mrs. Falconer made an extensive survey of the Virginia Industrial School for Delinquent Negro Girls and reported back to the Commission:

"I have visited all such institutions and I find that money which the Government has expended through the Peak School for wayward colored girls has produced the largest results, and has been the most efficiently administered, of any funds which the Government has appropriated for like purposes anywhere in the United States."²

A study as to the reason for Virginia's leadership in this field is well worth while. Virginia may well be proud of the place which it now occupies in the care of delinquent Negro girls. It is, then, with the importance of delinquency in general and of delinquency among Negroes in particular in mind, and with a special consciousness of the very excellent piece of work which has been done in Virginia in this respect that the following study is undertaken.

**Definition of Terms:**

For the purpose of this study the words of its title seem to need definition in order to clarify their use herein. The need for such definition is quite apparent when one reads the literature on this and kindred subjects and sees the variety of uses of various words.

¹ Margaret Reeves, Training Schools for Delinquent Girls, New York, 1929, Russel Sage Foundation.
² The Southern Workman, August 1920, p. 326.
Chapter 481, Acts of 1922, an act to amend and re-enact sections 1905 to 1922, inclusive, of the Code of Virginia defines for legal purposes the types of delinquency which shall be considered sufficient to legally charge a juvenile with delinquency.

"Sec. 1906. For the purpose of this chapter, the words 'delinquent child' shall include a child under eighteen years of age who--

"Violates a law of this State or a city, town or county ordinance; or

"Is incorrigible; or

"Is a persistent truant from school; or

"Habitually associates with vagrants, criminals or reputed criminals, or vicious or immoral persons; or

"Is an habitual loafer or vagrant; or

"Uses habitually intoxicating liquor as a beverage, or who uses opium, cocaine, morphine, or other similar drug without the direction of a competent physician; or

"Frequents a disorderly house or house of ill fame; or

"Frequents a gambling-house or place where gambling device is operated; or

"Habitually and without restraint uses or writes or circulates vile, obscene, vulgar, profane or indecent language, or is guilty of acts of moral perversion."

Such cumbersome definition may well be needed to satisfy the requirements of legal machinery, but for the purposes of this study it is not felt that such a defining is necessary or even workable. Much of the language of the act itself is not clear; for instance, witness the many uses of the word "incorrigible". Margaret Reeves defines delinquent children, "Children who commit acts which would be counted as crime if the offenders were adults, or whose conduct is such as to expose them to the liability of becoming vicious or depraved."\(^1\)

The above definition by Miss Reeves seems to the writer to be a more workable definition and shall herein define his use of the word "delinquent".

\(^1\) Op. cit.
Quoting further from Sec. 1906 of the amended Code as cited above:

"The words 'dependent child' shall mean a child under eighteen years of age, who is homeless or destitute or dependent on the public for support; or whose parents, for good cause, desire to be relieved of its care and custody or who is without parent or guardian able to provide for its support, training and education, and is unable to maintain himself by lawful employment, except such children as are herein defined as 'neglected' or 'delinquent'.

"The words 'neglected child' shall mean a child under eighteen years of age:

"Who is abandoned by both parents; or if one parent is dead, by the survivor, or by his guardian; or

"Who has no proper parental care or guardianship; or

"Who habitually begs or receives alms; or

"Who is found living in a house of ill fame or with vicious or disreputable persons; or

"Whose home, by reason of neglect, cruelty or depravity on the part of its parent, guardian or other person in whose care it may be, is an unfit place for such child; or

"Whose parents or guardian refuse, when able to do so, to provide medical surgical or other remedial care necessary for its health or well-being; or

"Whose parents or guardian permit such child, if under the age of sixteen, to engage in any occupation or calling defined by the child labor law as dangerous to the life or limb or injurious to the health or morals of such child."

The above definitions for dependent and neglected children will serve the purposes of this study. As a matter of practical usage, there is no real need for defining the terms except, perhaps, as a matter of protection to the dependent or neglected child, and due to an unfortunate and unfair stigma attached to the word delinquent. The theory of new legislation is that children are neither innocent nor guilty of crime. The theory is that if a child needs the protection and care of the state to prevent him from crime, it is the duty of the state to give such protection and care. The Virginia Industrial School for Negro Girls was founded by a group of private citizens for the purpose of caring for delinquent girls. The state, since it took over the institution, has made it a practice to admit
only such girls as the founders intended should be admitted. Hence, while the school is a state institution, the only neglected and dependent girls admitted are those who have been committed for delinquency in some form.

"Institutional Care" shall refer to any measures taken on behalf of the child after the child has been duly committed to the Industrial School at Peak, Virginia, and up to the time the child is properly graduated from the care of that school. It shall, then, include the parole and post-parole history of the child.

The term, "Negro Girls", shall be taken to mean any girls who have been so adjudicated by the law or juvenile courts of this state, whether the girl possesses the so-called "distinguishable trace" or not. Included in the statistics is the case of one girl who was at one time committed to the school at Bon Air for white delinquent girls, was paroled, taken into custody by the authorities, and committed to the school at Peak as a Negro. The child had been abandoned as an infant and had been brought up, if one can dignify her subsequent history as up-bringing, in such a way that she had had no contact with either race which would give her a sense of oneness. It was impossible for the court to apply any criteria sufficiently scientific to determine her racial identity. Any mention of Negro girls which refers to any not so adjudicated, shall refer to those bearing the "distinguishable trace".

Factors Influencing the Problem:

There are three separate groups of factors which bear upon
the problem in such a way that they need definition and discussion. The first is the history and trend of the changing laws affecting the care of delinquent children. The juvenile court, the State Board of Charities and Corrections, and the State Board of Public Welfare must be mentioned as bearing directly upon the problem. The second group of factors might be called extra-state agencies and include Mrs. Janie Porter Barrett, the founder of the school and its present superintendent. If a real history of the school were to be written, it would be a history of this remarkable woman. The Virginia State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, certain white women in Virginia, and certain outside agencies and individuals all have played their part at one time or another in a more or less dramatic manner in the movement to provide adequate care for delinquent Negro girls in Virginia. The third factor which forces itself into the discussion is public opinion as it bears both upon the whole attitude toward delinquency in general and as it also bears upon these special girls because of their race.1

Juvenile courts had in 1928 been established in all cities and in all counties except Dinwiddie, Highland, Isle of Wight, Amelia, Mecklenburg and Rappahannock.2 In 1914 they had been established in so few cities and counties and their effect had

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1 It is felt by the writer that there is an excellent field for research on the question of race attitudes and mental conflict. Such study would be expensive but very worthwhile and probably startling in its findings.

been so little felt that it has seemed advisable to start this study with that year. The acceptance of juvenile courts and the theory behind their authority has been rapidly accepted to such an extent that today we accept them as a highly beneficial part of our life, but it was only fifteen years ago in the city of Newport News that an eight year old child was sentenced to serve six months in jail.

Historically, the crown has for a long time been parens patriae and has exercised its right of protection through the great seal.¹ So in equity the child has long been considered a ward of the state and through chancery has derived the benefits of this guardianship. True, historically, this power was usually exercised only when property rights were involved but the precedent was well established. At common law, minors have been recognized as occupying a favored position though it was exercised largely in the matter of protection. Children under seven years of age in common law were held incapable of committing a crime. Therefore, our juvenile courts derive their authority from ancient sources in equity and by extending the age limit from seven to eighteen it is possible to conceive of the duty of the state as being only widened. As quoted from Flexner and Oppenheimer in Public Welfare Laws of Virginia, the theory of the juvenile court is made plain:

"While many of the methods used by juvenile courts, and the conception of having a distinct court devoted to the interests of one class, were unknown in the common law, nothing was more familiar to those who practiced before common law judges than the idea that a certain class of offenders were to be tried by different standards and before different tribunals. 'Benefit of Clergy' was the refuge of the most powerful class in the

¹ In re Spence (2 Phillips' Ch. Rep. 247).
community; the juvenile court is the refuge of the most helpless.

"The basic conceptions which distinguish juvenile courts from other courts can be briefly summarized. Children are to be dealt with separately from adults. Their cases are to be heard at a different time and, preferably, in a different place; they are to be detained in separate buildings, and, if institutional guidance is necessary, they are to be committed to institutions for children. Through its probation officers the court can keep in constant touch with the children who have appeared before it. Taking children from their parents is, when possible, to be avoided; on the other hand, parental obligations are to be enforced. The procedure of the court must be as informal as possible. Its purpose is not to punish but to save. It is to deal with children not as criminals but as persons in whose guidance and welfare the State is peculiarly interested. Save in the cases of adults, its jurisdiction is equitable, not criminal, in nature."¹

Hence, in juvenile courts it is not felt that the child should be treated as criminal but is to be taken to a place where a citizen who, for want of a better name, is called "Judge" is given the benefit of the best medical, psychological, psychiatric, and other advice in his task of guiding the child and preventing the child from being victimized or misguided. The mechanics of the juvenile court are too familiar to need exposition here. Juvenile court laws are anything but uniform and are probably nowhere ideal. A few salient features of the Virginia law as applied to the juvenile courts should be sufficient. In Virginia it is provided (Sec. 1945, Acts of 1922) that the council of cities of more than 25,000 inhabitants shall set up the machinery for a juvenile and domestic relations court in the city, provided that in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 the civil or police court judge may be so appointed. The judge appointed as designated above must act in conference with the Commissioner of Public Welfare in certain matters and is thus,

¹ Public Welfare Laws of Virginia, p. 34.
at this time, at least, given the benefit of aid from one widely experienced in the care and handling of juveniles and one who is interested in the welfare of the state rather than concerned with legal technicalities.

It is further provided that (Sec. 1954-a, Acts of 1922) the circuit court of cities of less than 25,000 population, or the corporation court if there be no circuit court, and the circuit court of any county shall appoint a judge of the juvenile and domestic relations court as prescribed above. In case a city of 25,000 or more and an adjoining county or district wish to join in the matter of providing a court of this special nature, they may do so under section 1953-1 of the act cited above.

The juvenile court in Virginia has jurisdiction in the cases of children under eighteen years of age in handling delinquency, dependency, and neglect as described on pages five, six, and seven of this study and under such restrictions and exceptions as are laid down.

As in the fields embracing other sciences, the field of public welfare has undergone a series of changes. These changes have been marked by experimentation just as in law and in medicine although the public is generally less familiar with the evolution of data pertaining to public welfare. The earliest period of welfare was essentially one of care. This period has been supplemented by a period of cure, and we are now in the period of control and are, at least theoretically, facing the period of prevention. To quote from page seven, Public Welfare
"As is naturally to be expected, public welfare work in Virginia is a mixture of the ancient, medieval, and modern. The early days of the Colony saw the establishment of county institutions, the jail and the almshouse, which for two hundred years formed a large part of the background of the charities and corrections. The system of poor relief, similar to England's, was early instituted. In 1769 the first state hospital in America for the insane was built at Williamsburg, and from that beginning a vast system of state charitable and correctional institutions has grown, consisting of four hospitals for the insane, two colonies for the feeble-minded, four industrial schools for juvenile delinquents, a penitentiary, a state farm for felons, a state farm for defective misdemeanants, a system of convict road camps, sanitariums, schools, etc.

"In order to give a degree of coordination to the system, the Assembly, in 1908, created the State Board of Charities and Corrections. In 1922 a reorganization was effected which changed the Board of Charities and Corrections to the State Board of Public Welfare, providing, in addition, for a state-wide system of local welfare units, consisting of juvenile and domestic relations courts, boards of public welfare, and superintendents of public welfare.

"Paralleling this, certain other welfare laws, constituting one of the foremost social codes in America, was enacted."1

One of the important functions of the Board of Public Welfare is that of officially visiting and inspecting the various institutions under its control. It is provided that visits shall be made at least every six months to the industrial schools and that visits shall be made by at least two members.

The Children's Bureau of the board is provided for in Sec. 1902-k. In this section the board is "Authorized and empowered to create a Children's Bureau***subject to the control of the board, (and it) shall have general supervision of the interests and welfare of the mentally defective, dependent, delinquent and neglected children of Virginia."2 The bureau shall establish suitable receiving and detention facilities for the

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid, p. 13
handling of committed children and is further authorized to make a careful physical and mental examination of every child brought within its jurisdiction and also to make proper and helpfully detailed investigation into the personal and family history of the child and to place the child in such family, home, or institution as it shall judge to be best suited to the cure of such case. The effect of such provision will be noted later under another section devoted to the types of commitment records received at the Peak school with the child.

**Outside Agencies:**

The history of the care of delinquent Negro girls in Virginia is so closely tied up with and is so intimately a part of the very nature and the work of Mrs. Janie Porter Barrett that it is difficult to write this history without giving an extended account of this extraordinary woman. A sketch of Mrs. Barrett's life would have to begin with her upbringing in the "big house" in Georgia where her mother was the nurse of the family and where Mrs. Barrett's early life was influenced by the cultural advantages of contact with the finest of the South. She was consequently enabled to take with her to Hampton a cultural endowment much richer than that afforded most entering students at that institution, particularly in its earlier days.

After her graduation from Hampton she was married to a young man who upon his graduation from the school had gone to work in the school offices and who was later to become cashier and head accountant at the school and whose work for the school
and in the surrounding community is still held up to the youth of the community as the ideal toward which to strive. This remarkable young couple built a house for themselves in the town of Hampton and it was there and almost immediately after their marriage that they started the Locust Street Settlement work which was destined to play so important a part in the community life of Hampton and which excited so widespread an interest and praise. One phase of Mrs. Barrett's work was an emphasis on the rehabilitation of children caught in the toils for misdemeanors, and the placing of such children in surroundings which would serve to educate the children away from the results of their early and unfortunate environment. The history of the Locust Street settlement work would serve well as the topic for a study of the nature of this one. It has been commented upon from the human interest standpoint on various occasions, notably in the "Survey", the Southern Workman, (Vol. XXXIII, No. 7), and Hampton Leaflet, A Palace of Delight, 1915.

It was out of this settlement work with its multitude of problems and experiences that the Idea sprang. Let Mrs. Barrett explain something of the part played by the Virginia State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, although one gathers from ascertainable sources that the action of the Federation was the action of Mrs. Barrett working through the medium of other women of her race:

"There were two reasons why the Virginia Industrial School was established. One was that the Virginia State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs was trying to meet the requirements of
the National Association of Colored Women of which it become a part; the other was that our federation wanted to do something very definite, not only to improve Negro womanhood, but to make our state a better place in which to live.***

"Rendering service, climbing to a higher plane of citizenship, and lifting those farthest down was what the women of the Virginia Federation had in mind when they started out to establish the Virginia Industrial School. At that time there was no place except jail for a colored girl who fell into the hands of the law; so there was no question about the need for such an institution.

"A farm was selected, the first payment was made, and we gave ourselves five years to pay the whole cost."***"1

In the meantime, just when these women probably needed as at no other time the goad of some flagrant incident, occurred the case of the eight year old colored girl in Newport News who was sentence to six months in jail as above referred to. The details of this important case will later be given.

To let Mrs. Barrett continue with the incidents of the founding of the school in order to show the further part played by the colored women in its founding and to show the invaluable aid given by certain white women in the state who for certain reasons and for the purposes of this paper will be left unnamed:

"At our next meeting in June the women brought all the money needed to finish paying for the farm. The charter was granted and the school opened in the old farmhouse that was purchased with the farm. Every woman gave until she could feel it. Our Federation is not made up of women of means and I knew at what cost they had raised $5300 and I also knew that unless help came from some outside source they would not have the courage to go on. The more some of us thought about it the more convinced we were that cooperation among all women ought to include the white women and so the Virginia Federation acted upon this conviction."

The Federation women wanted the State to give an appropriation for the support of the school. They were told that

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1 Address delivered at the Hampton Anniversary, April 23, 1926.
Virginia had never given its money to women to spend and they certainly would not give it to colored women, it mattered not how worthy the cause.\footnote{Southern Workman, August, 1926, p. 356} The legislators advised them to get a board of white women and some white men who knew something about business; but Mrs. Barrett knew that if the school was to be a success it would have to be managed by both white and colored men and women. The president of the Federation appealed to a white friend with whom she had worked in community efforts in her home town, to secure the white members of the board and she finally consented to undertake it. It was not an easy task. She applied to many who wrote the most beautiful letters of regret but said they found it impossible to serve. Finally her husband said, "Why don't you give this thing up? You know white people are not going to serve on a board with colored people," and she said, "I know there are white people in Virginia who will do it and I am not going to stop until I find them"---and she did find them.

The woman who had got the white members for the board was elected president; and then there was a fight for the appropriation. The president of the Board of Managers and the president of the State Federation started out to raise money for the first building. The Misses Stewart of Richmond gave the first $2,000 toward it. Nearly all the rest of the money was given by friends in the North that Hampton Institute made it possible for them to reach. The Federation president consulted the Russell Sage Foundation as to the kind of buildings needed. Hampton Institute
allowed its superintendent of construction to draw plans and supervise the building free of charge. A year from the time the institution opened in the farmhouse, an up-to-date brick building with all modern improvements was dedicated and twenty-five girls, who never had a chance, were started on the road to better citizenship.

Thus the factors which have from time to time borne upon this school and most particularly in its earlier days have been shown in their relation to the founding and early operation of the school. The amounts of financial aid and backing accruing to the school from different sources will be found in appendix A. The Board of Directors of the school both before and after the time when it was taken over by the state has always contained the names of some of the most substantial and socially minded people in the state. It is natural that such a worthwhile work, lead by such a woman as Mrs. Barrett, should attract to it the help and guidance which it has secured not only from the white and colored people of Virginia but also the financial aid of people in the North. At one time the building program was aided to the amount of $20,000 by the Fosdick Commission.

While the scientifically trained have for some years now been looking at the case of juvenile delinquency as was outlined on pages 13 and 14 of this study, the vestigial remains of the old point of view is held by the majority. As in the case of all culture lags, the skeletal remains of the medieval theory of punishment overshadows in the minds of the public
the newer curative measures being practiced quite generally now. The job of moulding and enlightening public opinion in relation to delinquency will, no doubt, be a long and tedious one. Until the idea that a child has a freedom of choice between right and wrong and has the perspective and the point of view to judge wisely his or her acts, has been thoroughly dispelled, the job of those dealing with delinquent children must ever be one of combating an adverse and unsympathetic public opinion. The problems connected with probation and parole are made much more difficult by this factor which looms so largely in our mores.

The work at Peak is further complicated by the fact that these girls are of the Negro race and are, therefore, subject to all the infirmities attached to that race. The effects of the opinion of the dominant group upon the impressionable youth of the weaker group are manifold. Certainly one of the strong impelling motives which serve to make a person conform to his environmental conditions, which make man accept the mores and folkways of the social order with which he is surrounded and with which he is supposed to have a sense of oneness is the very fact that he is supposed by the others of his group to conform to those conditions. One of the stamps of our culture, theoretically at least, is respect for the law per se, such respect, though, springing at least partly from the idea that conformity is expected rather than nonconformity. From an intimate association with Negroes of various culture levels over a period of years, and through conversation upon the point
with various deep thinking members of that race, the writer is thoroughly convinced that if the white man expected more of the Negro, he would get it. In case he did not get it, if he used the white man's yardstick in measuring the consequences, the whole standard of Negro conduct would be raised to a surprising extent.

The problem of juvenile delinquency among Negro girls is thus complicated by this double racial standard. The writer does not mean to imply that all or nearly all of the delinquency is due to this lower standard but simply wishes to stress the fact which at once becomes apparent to one is at all intimately associated with the problem that this dual standard is a potent but apparently unmeasurable factor in the causes of delinquency among Negro girls.
CHAPTER II

Shaping the School Policies

The Incident from Which the Work Started. Prior to the establishment of the school at Peak there were in Virginia no places available for delinquent Negro girls, no matter how tender their years, except the jails. Perhaps the case of the child already mentioned was not at all typical but it is symptomatic of a condition which prevailed. Mrs. Barrett told the story of the child very well at Hampton Institute on April 23, 1926, and the story is perhaps best told in her words:

"--A little girl eight years old was sentenced in the court of Newport News to serve six months in jail. When I saw an account of it in the Daily Press I called up the judge and asked him if he would allow me to be responsible for the child and let her spend the six months in the Weaver Orphanage Home in Hampton. The judge asked who was speaking. I said, 'Mrs. Barrett'. At that time I did not know that there was a very prominent white woman living in Newport News by the same name, so without any hesitancy the judge said, 'Yes'. I asked if I might come for her at once. He said no (it was Saturday afternoon) but I could get her Monday morning; so I had to be contented to wait.

"When the court opened Monday morning I was there, with the head of the Weaver Home, but the judge seemed to change his mind when he saw me. He asked what was the name of the girl I had come for. I said, 'I don't know, but surely there is only one child eight years old serving a sentence', which was exactly the wrong thing to say! The judge reved, saying he had nothing to do with bringing criminals into court and if women looked after their children as they should, they would not have
to come into the courts, etc. In the meantime the little girl was brought in, and in that crowded courtroom filled with all sorts and conditions of men, she looked hardly six years old. Before I knew it I said, 'Is this the baby that is to serve six months in jail?' which of course, was the wrong thing again! And then the judge said, 'I have no right to give you this child. I don't know who you are.' I said, 'Judge, I may not be the right one to have the child, but I am certainly better than the jail.' 'Well,' he said, 'You'll have to adopt her.' I said, 'I don't want to adopt her. I have children of my own, but I do want to save Virginia the disgrace of making a baby like this serve a sentence.' I never have known just what the judge did, but when I left the courtroom I took the child with me."

The Delinquent Child to be Educated Away from Her Delinquency. The institution at Peak began its life unhindered by any binding misconceptions, and prejudices. It had that factor in its favor. Mrs. Barrett and others who were instrumental in starting the work were not versed in the methodology of juvenile delinquency but neither were they handicapped by legal, racial, or social prejudices; and Mrs. Barrett had, in addition to her natural equipment which included a keen sympathy and understanding, a fine intellectual equipment, a faith in human nature, and an ability to handle and get along with people, a complete willingness to learn. The concept upon which the work of the school was started was a firm belief that the children who were admitted were not "bad" but were in need of a proper sort of education. It was recognized that the educating of these girls would be extremely difficult as it would be necessary to iron out wrinkles of years standing. It was felt, though, that through reeducation much could be done if the girls were properly appealed to and properly treated.

With these aims and beliefs in view the school was started in the old farmhouse which stood upon the farm bought by the
Federation for the project. One of the earliest experiences at the school as related by Mrs. Barrett will serve to illustrate the common sense used in handling the girls and will show some of the rigors of the earliest pioneer work.

One of the earliest cases, related Mrs. Barrett, was of a girl arrested in Richmond as being disorderly. The child had been reared in the country and was one of a large family of children. She had gone to Richmond to work without any friends in the city and it was only a short time before she was running the streets in bad company. She was arrested and committed to the institution at Peak. Mrs. Barrett was notified and went to Richmond to meet the child who was to be brought to her at the Main Street station. The child was young and small for her age and, although a very large policeman was delegated to deliver the delinquent to Mrs. Barrett, she had fought so and screamed so, as the policeman almost literally dragged her through the streets to the station, that a large and interested crowd was on hand at the station to see what was to become of the girl.

Mrs. Barrett met the procession at the station and ordered the policeman to drop the girl which he did only under protest. When Mrs. Barrett had sufficiently quieted the child she said that she had fought so because she wanted to see her mother before she went to the institution and the police had refused to send for the mother. Mrs. Barrett ordered the girl back to the jail and refused to accept her until she had had the interview with her mother, an interview which seemed to the child to be of paramount importance. The policeman started to
educate Mrs. Barrett right there, telling her that one couldn't get anywhere with that kind of a person by treating her in that manner, honoring her, but that it was necessary to treat them rough. The policeman phoned the judge and told him that the Superintendent refused to receive the child until she had seen her mother. The judge told the police that Mrs. Barrett was well within her rights as the school was then a private institution. A day or so later Mrs. Barrett went once again to Richmond and the child was again brought to her, this time, through the instigation of Mrs. Barrett, in a patrol wagon instead of being dragged through the streets. The girl went quietly this time but with the avowed purpose of running away at the first opportunity. On the way out in the train, the girl told the Superintendent that in all her life she had never had a new dress from a store. When she had first gone to work in Richmond, she had gone to a store and had made a first deposit on a dress which she had wanted and had paid for it all with the exception of one dollar when she was arrested—she was to secure delivery of the dress when it was paid for. She had wanted to see her mother to send her to the store with the remainder of the purchase price of the dress and to take delivery of the long cherished garment. So largely had loomed to the child the importance of securing the dress that her demonstration had seemed to her to be the least she could do to save herself from frustration in her great desire. Mrs. Barrett, of course, knew nothing of the dress and it was only through her belief in
human nature that she had been able to secure this first
victory in winning over the recalcitrant girl.

The first night the girl was at the school everything
went as usual, everyone having supper, doing the evening tasks,
and going to bed at the usual time. There was no matron on
duty and about four o'clock in the morning Mrs. Barrett was
wakened by the girls upstairs whispering and by a scraping
noise on the outside of the house. She rushed out and found
the new girl escaping by means of a sheet rope. Instead of
chiding the girl she merely told the girl that it was a bit
before their usual rising hour, but if she was unable to sleep
she might as well go to work. She and Mrs. Barrett went to
work cleaning the house and worked from four that morning until
late that night. The child went to sleep immediately upon re-
tiring, but Mrs. Barrett stayed awake guarding against a second
attempt at escape. The next morning the child and Mrs. Barrett
went to work again, Mrs. Barrett always setting the pace. The
child, upon being questioned, reiterated her intent to escape;
so another day of arduous toil followed and again that night
Mrs. Barrett stood guard while the child slept. The following
morning the grind started again and in the forenoon Mrs. Barrett
asked the girl if she liked the place any better and if she was
still bent on escape. The child answered that she was beginning
to like it and said that she would like it a lot if she didn't
have to work so hard. "Do we always have to work this hard?"

she wanted to know. Mrs. Barrett replied that they usually
worked much less but the girl apparently could not sleep and the
best remedy for insomnia was work. The child then said that if she could only go out to play a while with Mrs. Barrett's little daughter she would be happy and would not think of running away again. Mrs. Barrett gladly sent her out under the trees to play. That night both the Superintendent and the child slept the night through and the girl never gave any more trouble.

Slowly experience piled upon experience and Mrs. Barrett learned from the girls and the girls from her. Most of the rules of the institution, of which there are surprisingly few, have been laid down through induction coming from experience within the institution. Today both in the office and in the living room in the Harris Barrett Memorial Cottage, the home of the Superintendent, are to be observed well worn copies of the finest books on the care of delinquent children, on criminology and penology, upon race, and upon the various subjects which bear upon the problems of the institution. A question asked the superintendent will bring forth an answer quite in accord with the very latest ideas in her field but the explanation of reason is usually drawn from experience. At various times the writer has asked what is done in a particular instance. The reply has been in accord with the latest ideas of leaders in the field, ideas which have been codified but a few years. The kindly superintendent surprises the listener by saying that this thing has been done for more years than it has been advocated by the leading thinkers in the field.

Education at the school has ever been a process carried on
twenty-four hours a day. The daily program of the school is to be found in appendix B, tables 1 and 2. One half of the girls attend school in the forenoon while the rest of the girls carry on their work about the buildings or in the fields or with the pigs or the chickens. In the afternoon those who had been to school in the forenoon work, and those who had worked in the forenoon attend school. At meals, at work, at school, at play, and on all possible occasions the work goes on, the work of reeducating these girls. As soon as a girl demonstrates her ability to take responsibility she is given it. No girl is allowed to waste in the wrong direction any of her talents of leadership or initiative. The girls are organized into groups of ten with a captain and a lieutenant for each group. Discipline is largely attended to by these captains and lieutenants, and nowhere could a group of executives be found who feel any more keenly their responsibilities.

No matter how important the visitor, the superintendent is never too absorbed to rectify any error no matter how slight committed by one of her girls. At table, the girl who is waiting on the table of the superintendent and her guests is held to the most rigid of niceties. No laxity in good service no matter how trivial is overlooked. These girls are mostly going out as house servants and are receiving a training which will make them highly desirable in that capacity. Laundry work must be done in the very finest manner, cooking is taught as is sewing, both these household arts being a part of the regular
school curriculum and also a part of the everyday life of the children. Honesty of the most rigid kind is enforced. One day the first of the year when the writer was a guest at the school a few of the girls were in disgrace for having each taken a pocket full of corn when it was being taken to the barns from the fields. A pocket full of corn, and the guilty ones were the recipients of a lecture on honesty, the fact being impressed on them that they had taken something which was not theirs. A valentine's party was in order for the next day and the girls were given to understand that they had, by their conduct, voted against attending the party. They were not told that they were to be punished for taking the corn, but were told that they had chosen between the corn and the party and had voted against the party. The writer was sorry for the girls and really felt that the taking of a few kernals of corn was a matter so trivial that the punishment was way out of proportion to the offense, thinking, you see, in terms of the old concept of punishment. The superintendent upheld her position, saying that the code of honesty practiced there must be much more strict than that with children who had had a different upbringing. After watching the school over a period of months, the writer is convinced that the superintendent is right and, what is more, she is successful in her attempts to inculcate concepts of right and wrong.

The girls had wanted the corn to eat, parching it on the hearth. Mrs. Barrett had explained to the girls that she would have given them corn for their purpose had they asked for it. Upon his next visit, the writer took along ten boxes of corn to
be popped by the girls. The superintendent, however, explained that it was only for those who did not steal corn, although the donor had had a sneaking hope that some of it might go to the culprits.

Personal cleanliness and hygiene are taught from the first and soon a girl is not happy without her tooth brush, her own soap and towel with which to take her daily bath, and without the opportunity to take proper care of her person. In short, an attempt is made to develop within the girl a self respect at the same time that she is being taught her school lessons and is given useful training which will serve to make her a productive civil and economic person upon her graduation from the school.

Letters are received each year by the superintendent from large numbers of girls asking the privilege of returning for the commencement exercises at the school. Good conduct on parole and after discharge is a condition precedent to the right to attend commencement and no group of alumni anywhere is prouder of its alma mater than are the girls who have been graduated from this place of last resort, and it is the opinion of the writer that it would be hard to find a school anywhere that has served to do so much for its students as has that little school for delinquent Negro girls at Peak, Virginia.

Causes of Delinquency. It may as well be said right here that the records of commitments and the records kept at the school are so inadequate and that a classification of causes of delinquency are so obscure in a majority of cases that any proof
as to the real cause of the delinquency is impossible.

Reference to appendix C, pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, will show a classification of charges against the children who have been committed to the institution since it was founded. These charges come from a careful study of all commitment records in the files of the school. In some cases a double charge or a triple charge was made so that the total number of charges appreciably exceeds the total number of commitments. A study of the charges will show that those preferred against the children at first were cumbersome, legally hidebound, and possessed of nothing helpful to the people at the school whose duty it is to try to get at the real cause of the child's difficulty and correct it. The list of charges are roughly grouped according to their frequency of occurrence by periods. Those charges which were most frequently brought against the girls in the early days of the school and least frequently brought in the latter days are placed first. The median is stuck by years and this median of the charges determines its place in the table. Thus it will be seen that such meaningless charges preferred against children as "Breach of the Peace", "Assault and Battery", "Disorderly", "Larceny", "Street-Walking", etc. come in the early parts of the table.

Of the four juveniles whose crime against society was that they broke the peace, three so forgot themselves in the year 1916 and one in 1917. Thus the median comes late in 1916. Such a modern charge as "Bad-Stayed in Place Where Bootlegging Went
On" would naturally come near the end of the list. It is interesting to note that the last on the list has been classified by the investigator as "Details Given so Fully as to Be Truly Helpful". One such case appeared in 1921 and one in 1922, while but two appeared in 1924. In 1925, however, the Bureau of Public Welfare with its machinery of clinics and social workers was beginning to make itself felt and was rendering commitment papers of such a nature that they might prove helpful to the workers at the school in making a diagnosis of the child's difficulty with a view to correcting the basic trouble.

In such a serious study there is really no place for humor but one would be tempted to laugh if it were not so tragic, at the charges of "Larceny", "Street-Walker", "Vagrant", "Felony", "Prostitution", "Fornication", "Dispute with Man About Money", "Fighting", "Immorality", and "Questioned" brought against children of 12 to 16 years of age, mere children. One may well let his imagination have full sway when he tries to picture the child who had the argument with a man about money or the twenty-one children who were "immoral". In the light of our present psychiatric and psychological advancement these charges become at once absurd when preferred against children. One wonders what future generations will say about the commitment of a child for being bad and staying in a place where bootlegging went on or for violating the prohibition law.

With the awkward phraseology of the charges it is impossible to draw any conclusions from the list of charges. Certain it is
that the percentage of commitments with details given so fully as to be helpful is increasing. The accident of two as early as 1921 and 1922 was due entirely to the fact that the children's mothers worked for people of importance and these people wrote personal letters from which it was possible to arrive at some idea as to what was really troubling the child. In reading over the piles of commitment papers the writer was impressed with two things upon which he could secure no worthwhile statistics although it was only after several days of work that he abandoned the attempt. The large percentage of children who have got into their present difficulties due to the fact that the mother was obliged to work during the day and that the child had nobody at home to look after her after she arrived home from school is really alarming. No doubt the number is much larger than with white children as the percentage of Negro mothers who for economic reasons are obliged to work outside the home and are thus precluded from furnishing a proper home life for their children is very great. The other factor which was so striking was the large number of children who were in difficulty for purely economic reasons. With the inadequate commitment records, however, it was impossible to determine at all accurately either numbers or percentages.

Certain it is that the percentage is much larger than that brought out by other studies such as "The Unadjusted Girl" by Thomas¹, "The Unmarried Mother" by Kramerer², and in "A Study

¹Thomas, The Unadjusted Girl, pp. 117-118
²Kramerer, The Unmarried Mother, p. 320
If the economic factor is as important as it appears to be as a cause in delinquency of Negro girls in Virginia, then the school at Peak is attacking the problem at its root. The economic factor may well be divided into two separate problems, that which has to do with a poor early home condition, a poor environment, poor recreational facilities and the like, a group of conditions which are purely social but which nearly always have at their base an economic inability to procure for the child a better social life. In this group of conditions would also be included such cases as occur so frequently and which have already been referred to, the case of the child whose mother works and who is therefore forced onto her own resources with no guidance. The other type of economic problem is the problem of the child who goes to work for herself and finds with her occupational activity a motive for delinquency. It is this latter type of economic cause which the industrial school is attempting to meet. The first group of economic causes are being met, as nearly as is possible in an institution, by the creation of a home life—in too many cases the first real home life any of the girls have ever known.

It is interesting to note that a very large percentage of Negro girls in the uneducated groups go into domestic service, a pursuit fraught with danger from a moral standpoint.
to a much greater degree than any other occupation open to women. It is unfortunate that a large percentage of the girls paroled or discharged from the school go into domestic service. This is a condition which it appears necessary to meet as under our present economic and social order in the South, domestic service seems to be the one outlet for Negro girls of the economic group from which a large percentage of the girls at the school are drawn.

One thing which is taught at the school is that all the girls should look forward to marriage, and the duties and obligations of marriage are taught. Not only are the girls given a training which will make of them servants of a rather superior type but they are also fitted for successful housewifery, thereby making for a more stable home life after the girl is married.

Parole. The Public Welfare Laws of Virginia do not attempt to regulate the subject of parole from institutions of the nature of the one at Peak, and probably wisely so. Each institution, if one may judge by the experience of the Peak institution, is the place where such parole policies should originate. Probable it is that in the case of Negro girls, the parole problem with all of its trying phases would not have been worked out to its present degree of perfection had it been hampered by laws made for the regulation of parole in state institutions in general. The parole problem at the institution under discussion has presented a number of trying

situations, situations which have been courageously met with the good of the child always uppermost in the mind of the executive.

Girls have been paroled from the institution in numbers and by years as indicated by the table cited in appendix D. The problem of securing suitable homes for the girls is ever a trying one. The difficulty is largely created by the fact that few people wish to take a chance on admitting into their homes girls with an institutional record, a relic of a slowly departing concept of the criminal anthropologists, of the so-called Italian School. Added difficulties are presented by the lack of a sense of social duty on the parts of most people, a desire to escape the very real responsibility presented by the guidance of a paroled delinquent child, and by the very rigid requirements of the institution itself as to what kind of home the child shall enter for her parole period.

As early as 1916, after the school had been in operation but sixteen months, the superintendent was thinking about parole. She has to say about this subject in her first annual report pp. 9-10,

"Each girl will have at least two years' training and more, if necessary, before being paroled. Some are feebleminded and should never be paroled. Those who are paroled will be placed in carefully selected homes where they will be given protection.

"With the growing interest in this class of girls on the part of the best women in our state, it is going to be possible for them to get a protection and care that colored girls doing domestic service seldom get. Our plan is to keep in close touch with each girl after she leaves the institution. The women of the Federation will help them in every way possible and try to get the right companions and friends for them. The ministers have promised to help by seeking out the girls and inviting them to join their churches."
Again in the 1918, third annual, report, Mrs. Barrett has to say relative to the parole system:

"During the past year we have been testing out our parole system with the girls who have been in the institution two years and whom we thought strong enough to try in homes. We feel that it is going to meet our needs very successfully when we can have a parole officer to help do this very important part of our work. Valuable assistance has been rendered by the Travelers' Aid in the Richmond station, who have always been most kind and helpful to our girls, but it is a great mistake to send these girls away alone as we have been obliged to do at times because we have so few workers.

"Fourteen girls have been paroled into the homes of white and colored people, and while some will have to be tried in more than one home before the right one can be found, only two of the fourteen sent out have been complete failures.

"Blanks are sent to be filled out by those applying for girls which give as clear an idea of the home to which we are sending the girl as can be gotten without a personal visit. (Note appendix E, Form I, pp. 1, 2, 3 and appendix E, Form II, pp. 1 and 2). Then, with the greatest care, we proceed to find a girl to meet the needs of that home. This is not an easy task, for nearly everyone applying for a girl wants a perfectly honest, efficient, willing, good-natured, good-looking girl, so it takes some little time to make the applicants understand that the courts do not send me that type of girl, and while we are trying to make the girl all that she would like to have her, we cannot do more than get her started the right way; and that her reaching the goal will depend upon the personal supervision and sympathetic help that they are willing to give her when they take her into their homes.****

"I keep in touch with the girls by writing as often as I can and the lady to whom she is paroled sends a report once a month and oftener if the girl gives any trouble." (Note appendix E, Form III). "I encourage the girls to write very fully about the things that seem hard to them. If they are hard, I write to the ladies about them; if they are not hard, I show the girl that she is mistaken. In this way so much misunderstanding is saved.****

"Some of the girls have been placed in homes where they are sent to school and receive their room and clothing. One girl is working her way through a boarding school.

"Our girls who are earning wages have sent back to me one hundred dollars. When they first go away, half the money they send back is banked for them, each girl having her own bank book, the other half goes to pay for the clothing they take away when they leave the institution. They pay ten dollars for the outfit. When that is paid for, all the money they send is put to their account. This is done not only to teach them to save but in order that they may have some money of their own when they are dismissed from the school.

"The girls are most anxious to make good when they go out.

One girl who had been paroled to her mother wrote, 'Mrs. Barrett,
please let me come back to you. I can’t be respectable like you want me to if I stay here.’ I sent for her immediately. We have had no mental tests for our girls. I hope that we can have very soon. I believe, however, that we have all classes from the high-grade imbeciles to the normal girl. I am greatly concerned about what we are to do with the girls who come to us who are so feeble-minded that they ought always to have institutional care, unless some one can be found who will be responsible for them.”

In the annual report of 1919, Mrs. Barrett reports progress in her parole work as follows:

“We are asking for our girls clean quarters with a comfortable bed and clean bedding; a place to bathe; time to do their washing, ironing, and mending; and one free afternoon when they can have companionship of the right kind. The lady must know about the friends they are making and must have a keen personal interest in whatever concerns the girl. When these conditions are met, with few exceptions success follows and especially if the girl is paid enough to buy what she needs. I am looking forward to the time when we can have all the needed equipment for training, for when we can send out more efficient girls we can get better wages for them from the start.”

Mrs. Barrett speaks of parole as follows in the 1920 report:

“The majority of our girls out on parole are doing well. Of course there are failures—failures, I am sorry to say, for which the girls are not to blame. They are not properly handled and there are those who fail just because they do not want to do right. I feel that we have not yet found the way to make doing right attractive enough for those girls and we must do more for them. I have in mind the normal girl, of course. It does not seem fair to parole girls who are mentally defective; there seems to be nothing else to do at present, however, but they cannot be expected to make their way.

Experience teaches that the most favorable parole conditions are found by placing a girl in a good home other than her own at first. The parents who let a girl get beyond their control can seldom keep her headed right a year or two later. There are exceptions, usually, but if she goes home, she begins to drop back after the first week or two, to the place where she left off. The parents fail to report the condition and this robs the girl of the bracing given by the school; so before they realize it, she is drifting again. Then at home she is too near the undesirable associates she left. Our girls are sent to homes in response to direct application to the school by their employers; and people applying take the girls, as a rule, with a feeling of responsibility which carries with it a sympathetic interest that never fails to help them succeed.
The rapidly increasing number of girls on parole makes the need for a parole officer imperative. It is so necessary, in order to know conditions, to investigate the homes into which the girls are sent; and this can be done best by visits to such homes. This cannot be done, however, unless there is someone whose special work it is; I do hope this can be made possible. It is useless to expect a girl to make good if the standards of living taught at the school are not maintained in the home to which she goes. The feeling that anything is good enough for the one who serves in the home, and upon whom so much of the comfort of the home depends is all wrong; and it is only in homes where there is a different point of view that our girls succeed.

"We must do something to have the people taking these girls understand more fully that our Board of Managers insist that they be kindly treated. Slapping a girl and striking her on the head are out of the question. This kind of treatment, aside from being absolutely wrong, can do no good and will create a condition that will be most difficult to handle. Anyone having a girl is given the right to bring her back to the school whenever she ceases to give satisfaction, so there is no need of doing anything rash. It means so much to the success of these girls to feel that they have a home to come to, and we are not too severe if their first attempt at making a new start is a failure. How many women, or men for that matter, have achieved success without some failures?"

The 1921 report shows the superintendent still asking for aid in achieving some of the things she hopes to achieve.

Again quoting from the 1921 report,

"The girls who have left us and gone on parole into country homes are doing well. But it is always with a heavy heart that I send a girl to the city, for in far too many instances she goes under; the temptations are too great. She is simply swept off her feet. As a rule the girls give satisfaction in their work everywhere, for they are anxious to prove to us that they can make good 'out in the world' as they say. So they take the same pride in their work when they go out that they take at the school when they are working for their white dresses. If they are encouraged in this and treated kindly, in many instances they prove to be real comfort in the home. Any effort on the part of the employer to give the girls pleasure is always appreciated, and it ties the girl to her new home as nothing else could do."

"I encourage the girls to stay in a home as long as there is mutual satisfaction. I feel that they succeed as well as they do because I put much time and thought in trying to place them, with some idea of having them fit in and meet the needs of the homes to which they are sent. And then the club women and friends, white and colored, help me in finding the right kind of home. If, added to this force there could be a probation officer, I believe this phase of our work could be done very successfully."

While there are those who disappoint us, the majority of the girls are doing well and each year brings better results. I feel more than ever that the time and money spent in saving them is well invested."

In the annual report for 1922 the subject of parole is further discussed showing the progress made in some ways while in others little headway seems to have been made.

"Hattie's marriage", says the superintendent, "Furnished an excellent excuse for me to visit Powhatan County where a number of our girls have been paroled. Having no parole officer I have been obliged to visit the homes myself and can only find time for this, I am sorry to say, when something has gone wrong and adjustment is needed.****

"****Sometimes, in their efforts to impress people that I am their friend the girls misrepresent me without meaning to do so. On one occasion a girl told one of the ladies that Mrs. Barrett didn't want her scrubbing and doing hard work. The lady wanted to know—and rightly—if Mrs. Barrett had sent her there to be an ornament. A talk face to face gives me an opportunity to explain clearly what I mean when I make the request that the ladies take a personal interest in and protect the girl who lives under their roof, and they see immediately that I want both the lady and the girl to have a square deal."

The subject of parole is further discussed in the 1923 report and the method of handling the cases of parole is shown quite clearly as is the crying need of a trained parole office.

The report says:

"I feel that the parole work is just as important as any done in the institution, and should have the same careful direction in order that the girls may get that after-care upon which depends complete success. The parole is the test of whether the lessons we have been trying to teach in the institution have been well learned. The period immediately following the girl's release from the institution is a very critical one. Her success or failure in her effort to live up to the new standard given in the institution, depends on careful guidance. We cannot give regular and systematic supervision unless we have a parole officer working in cooperation with the State Board of Welfare.

"The girls ready for parole are sent on application to homes of white or colored people after the homes have been investigated. During this year each has been investigated by the State Board of Welfare and the girls go only into homes it approves. When the girl is not satisfactory, the people have the privilege of returning her at once. If we find that she is not being properly treated, we reserve the right to recall her
without any warning. (Note appendix E, Form I, pp. 1, 2, and 3).

"There is a contract which sets forth all regulations in regard to the girl's work, wages, living quarters, attendance at church, recreation, etc. (Note appendix E, Form II, pp. 1 and 2)."

"The lady to whom the girl is paroled is requested to make a monthly report of her health, conduct, work, and studies. With this report is sent a statement of how the girl's wages have been spent. (Note appendix E, Form III). She must send back to the school at least ½ of her earnings monthly to be placed to her account in the bank. This is turned over to her when she is dismissed or marries unless it has had to be used for illness or dental services.

"It is almost impossible to get reports from girls who are returned to their parents. We have to keep in touch with them in any way we can. If possible we get the girls back into their homes, but not if these homes are not the right kind. We have none of the sentiment which advocates sending a girl home when we know it is sending her to her ruin. However, we always make a girl feel that she must practice the new lessons of right living learned so that she can, when she grows strong enough to go home, help her people to a better life. But she knows she will have to prove that she is strong enough to do the right at all times before she can help anyone else. Some mothers, knowing this, move out of low districts and begin working to make an honest living in order to get their girls home. In these cases I have both the mother and the girl to supervise; when the mother knows that if she fails, I will take the girl back, it braces them both and the results are good.

*****Twelve have gone to other schools to continue their education. Only one has been graduated. Others have spent two or three years in school, but, not having sufficient funds, had to drop out. We try to find openings for them in other schools. Through Mr. Montague's efforts a scholarship has been awarded for the last two years. I hope that in time funds will be supplied to help the girls who do all they can to help themselves. Twenty-one of the girls have married. I am much pleased to report this for it shows that some of our ideals and standards for home life have taken root. We try to stress personal purity directly and indirectly at all times. Whether I find the couple living in one or two rooms or in a little cottage, I see there marks of the training we have given."

In the annual report for 1925 the superintendent tells of a new aid to the girls on parole. She says in part,

"No one except those who are very close to a girl knows her struggles, and if she keeps her head above the water it is often in spite of her surroundings. She is simply the common prey of people in the high places as well as the low, and often a girl finds that she is unequal to cope with the combined forces working to drag her down. Unless there is
someone to stand by and advise her and see that she gets protection she is exploited. It matters not how deeply interested the workers in the institution are in the paroled girl it is impossible for them to look after her properly when she is outside. A probation officer is one of our most imperative needs and I am sure it will be met; I hope very soon.

"Our Home School Messenger is a little typewritten paper that we have made every now and then since our school opened; but this year we are getting out two or more copies each month."

In the 1926 report Mrs. Barrett tells more of her difficulties resulting from the lack of an experienced parole officer. To quote from that report:

"Many of the ladies could not see why a girl of sixteen or seventeen years could not sleep over the garage or in a house out in the yard alone. The lady would ask why she should be expected to give a girl sheets. She would not keep them clean and she would not take care of the mattress. She could not see why she had to be bothered with the company she kept. She didn't care where she went if she did her work. She hadn't time to help her select her clothes and spend her money to the best advantage, to see that she attended church, and had some real pleasure occasionally, sometime to herself when she could look after her clothing, a time each day to get through her regular work, and above all to make her know that she must live up to the moral standards of the home in every way.

"After some were willing to try it out they found that it didn't work hardship at all but mutual benefit. If a girl is cared for in a home the people of the community are careful how they treat her. It gives the girl the protection that a home should give.****

"We are still without a parole officer," emphasizes the superintendent in her annual report for 1929, "but the Child Welfare Bureau of the State Department of Public Welfare has given valuable assistance in the matter of investigating homes. What we very much need is a parole officer who knows both the strong and weak points of the girls, and who has their confidence to visit them whenever they need advice.

"Our parole work could not have reached its present degree of success but for the splendid volunteer service of the women of the State Federation, who were the founders of the school. Girls paroled into sections where our club women are, receive advice and guidance which has contributed largely to their success on parole, whereas those who have gone to other sections are frequently not so successful because of the lack of such guidance. A parole officer, cooperating with the club women, for we should still need their help, could do most effective work."

Here we have had a picture of the problems more or less
as they have been forced upon the institution, the problems connected with the parole function of the reeducation of the girls committed to the school. Unsolicited testimonials from such authorities as Margaret Reeves and Dr. Miriam van Waters have set this school and its work on as high a plane as any school of similar kind in the country. We find a staff giving its best services underpaid and overworked as we shall later see, a staff doing a very fine piece of work, a work of which the state of Virginia may well be proud yet through all the years of the existence of the school the great need for an efficient, trained, and well-chosen parole officer has annually been called to the attention of the authorities and as yet nothing has been done to fulfill this need.

On the coast of Maine, where the writer has spent much time, there are two kinds of homes, two kinds of people, two kinds of living, shiftless and shipshape homes, people and living. The shipshape home is one well made and well kept with its lawn well trimmed, its fence painted or whitewashed, the tools and machines about the place properly housed and well taken care of. This home houses people who have achieved something and know how to appreciate it. The people in this home realize that if a thing is valuable, is worth working for, it is equally well worth taking care of. The shiftless may live in a more costly home but it is run down, badly in need of paint, the lawns are grown to weeds and the tools and machines are left out in the rain and sun. These people do not have a proper realization of values. If a thing is once
purchased its value is not appreciated. Here Virginia has an institution doing a valuable piece of work but after the work is done as far in as it is possible to do it at the school the fine work is let go without proper care because no provision has been made for a parole officer. The cost of a parole officer would be slight in comparison with the actual economic gain which such an officer would bring in savings to the state. That is entirely aside from the human value which I shall make no attempt to evaluate. What avail is it for Virginia to boast of one of the best and most modern codes of Public Welfare laws in the United States, a fact of which it can justly be proud, if it lets the good achieved by its institutions go to waste for lack of proper financial backing. If Virginia wants to be really shipshape it would be well to supply this long-felt need thereby seeing to its machines and tools and fences.

Again, in the matter of this transfer, the colored woman picked a fine spirit, giving up to their state, with joy and pride, the firm which they had bought and all their subsequent contributions of money, material, and sacrifices. This working together of whites and colored people in the spirit of Christian tolerance is no small part of the asset which Virginia has in this institution. The Federation woman also realize that their continued financial help and moral support, as also that of other friends, will be just as much needed now that the school has become a state institution, for there are numberless expenses which will not be met by the Commonwealth.

The first large building was named Federation Cottage in recognition of the services of the federation women; the two other large buildings erected by means of the special appropriation are called Virginia and Hanover Cottages, the latter
CHAPTER III

Development of the Physical Plant

"Virginia will not forget," says J. E. Davis in an article entitled "A Virginia Asset" in The Southern Workman for August, 1920, page 362, "that she is indebted to the colored women of the Commonwealth for the Industrial Home School. It was the State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs that purchased the site in 1914 for $5,200, thus making possible the establishment of the first home in the South for wayward colored girls.***

"The most momentous event in the history of the institution during the past year was the transference of the property from the Board of Trustees to the State of Virginia. It has always been in the minds of every member of the Board that as soon as the State was willing to take over the institution, they would give it up; and so, after struggling on, demonstrating its value, blazing the trail for other Southern States in this particular kind of work, after carrying the burden through the trying years of founding and building, the Board this year presented to the State of Virginia an institution valued in money at $75,000, an institution which has cost the State practically no more than would have been the cost of maintaining the same number of girls in the jails, which it would have had to do but for this school, now to be known as the Virginia Industrial School of Colored Girls.

"Again, in the matter of this transfer, the colored women showed a fine spirit, giving up to their state, with joy and pride, the farm which they had bought and all their subsequent contributions of money, material, and sacrifice. This working together of white and colored people in the spirit of Christian fellowship is no small part of the asset which Virginia has in this institution. The Federation women also realize that their continued financial help and moral support, as also that of other friends, will be just as much needed now that the school has become a state institution, for there are numberless expenses which will not be met by the Commonwealth.

"The first large building was named Federation Cottage in recognition of the services of the federation women; the two other large buildings erected by means of the special appropriation are called Virginia and Hanover Cottages, the latter
in appreciation of the friendliness shown in so many ways by the citizens of Hanover County. Virginia Cottage is used for a reception cottage, each girl on entering being assigned there where she is closely observed and studied from all angles.***

The farm which was purchased by the Federation women as already described (pp. 12-13) had on it a farmhouse and several outbuildings. The farm house which still stands is not at all adapted to the purposes for which it would be needed in a school such as this one. It was in this building that the work started, however, and as already pointed out the superintendent and the chairman of the board went north on a speaking trip in an attempt to raise money for the erection of a building. The first new building, Federation Cottage, was erected on the hill back of the old farm house at a cost of $9869. It is still a most serviceable building, well built and beautifully designed. It is of brick and is a building of which the Federation women may well be proud.

As was probably natural, there was a considerable amount of opposition to the starting of a school of the nature of this one in a quiet rural community. Few communities today would care to have erected a school of a correctional nature in their locality. The people of Peak were no exceptions. The opposition to the erection of the Federation Cottage was so great that the good friends of Mrs. Barrett advised her to abandon her project. The founder was able to call on her never-dying belief in the goodness of human nature and she ordered the work to be continued in spite of the feeling of dissenters and the advice of her friends. Opposition manifested itself to a degree
which actually hampered the work of the school. Through inter-
vention by local people, the State assistance which had been
asked was cut in half by the Assembly. Mrs. Barrett ordered
that not a piece of scroll or a pillar be slighted. The build-
ing went up without physical demonstration and at the opening,
dedication exercises were planned, exercises to which had been
invited numerous influential people from all over the state
and from other states. So interested were people in the ex-
periment that people of considerable prominence signified their
intention of attending the dedication exercises. While the
feeling against the building of the cottage was still at its
height and while planning for the dedication of the building,
Mrs. Barrett hitched up her mule team and traveled all through
the community. She told everybody, white and colored alike,
people representing every degree of temper about the school
that "We" are planning on entertaining such and such guests at
the dedication and don't you think that "We" should do it up
right, each one giving something, at least a chicken, to the
entertainment. That was the first time that anyone had had
the concept of "our" school or "this" school; heretofore it had
always been "their" school or "that" school. Give a chicken—
I should say so! Chickens, vegetables, pies, hams, eatables
of all kinds, delicacies for which Virginia is so justly noted
began to appear at the school. There was plenty to eat for
everyone at the dedication exercises and if there were any
residents of Hanover County who did not attend the exercises,
now "our" exercises, it has not been recorded. Today the resi-
dents of the county are most cooperative. The remarkable record which this school has had in freedom from escape is largely due to this cooperative spirit. People all around know "Mrs. Barrett's girls" and anyone who meets one off the grounds takes a keen personal interest in escorting her home unharmed. In the fifteen years since the school was founded, but five girls have gotten away and have never been found. The fact that one of the later cottages was named Hanover Cottage indicates the cooperative spirit which exists between the school and the community. Perhaps it may be the other way around.

Already mention has been made of the building of Virginia and Hanover cottages during the war with the help of the Fosdick commission and the State of Virginia. These with the Harris Barrett Memorial Cottage, the home of the superintendent, are the large buildings which set off the central Federation cottage. These buildings have grouped around them a laundry, a commissary, a power house, and a garage.

In the 1917 annual report, Mrs. Annie Moomaw Schmelz, President of the Board of Trustees of the institution, had to say:

"The over crowded condition in Federation Cottage makes it very important that the next building be a home for our superintendent, Mrs. Barrett, and because of the exemplary character and strong, helpful, constructive life of her husband, Mr. Harris Barrett, it was decided that the superintendent's cottage be built as a memorial to him and called the Harris Barrett Memorial Cottage.

"With this view, a great mass meeting of white and colored people was held in January in one of the colored churches in the town of Hampton. Long before the appointed hour, the crowds were so great that hundreds were turned away. With greatest
simplicity, respect, and appreciation, white and colored speakers paid tribute to the memory of a good man. The spirit that pervaded every person in the church, white and colored, was that of sympathy, understanding, good-will, fine feeling, and great mutual regard and esteem, one race for the other. Some of the older colored people, in writing to Mrs. Barrett about the meeting, said: 'We never expected in our lives to see such a meeting as that. A white choir on one side of the pulpit, a colored choir on the other, white and colored speakers at a meeting arranged by the white friends of the town to honor the memory of a colored man of the town. If only my father and my mother could have lived to see this day!' A collection for the memorial cottage taken that day amounted to $455. The fund has since been increased to $920.

'Dr. Frissell, one of the speakers, declared that if similar meetings could be held throughout the state they would be of great value, particularly at this time of Negro migration. At the annual meeting of the Board of the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes, Dr. Moton told of this memorial meeting and stated that Dr. Frissell said it was one of the most wonderful he had ever seen.

'To carry out Dr. Frissell's suggestion," continued the President, "We propose, through the Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, to have some of the women arrange for similar meetings in their respective cities. Dr. Frissell also said that Hampton Institute would like to help with the memorial cottage, so one Sunday evening in chapel the story of the colored girls' home was told, and a generous contribution was made by the students and faculty. At other places in Virginia the story has been told, last May before three very influential organizations of white women in Summit, Virginia, and before a mass meeting of colored people in Roanoke.'

During the period of the war the donations to the Harris Barrett Memorial Cottage came in slowly as was natural, for the wealth of the country was interested in war charities, but after the war people again turned their attentions to the proposed cottage and, while no campaign was conducted for the purpose of raising funds for this specific purpose, the Federation kept the issue alive and the dollars came into the treasury steadily. The cottage was finally completed and occupied in 1927. The total cost was $11,000, of which sum $2500 was finally given by the State of Virginia. Here then, in addition to the $75,000 plant turned over to the state in 1920, was an added gift amount-
The cottage is a substantial brick structure beautifully
designed and harmonious with the landscape and the general
architectural scheme. It is too bad that every white man and
woman in the United States can not pass through this home and
inspect it thoroughly. The furnishing of the home naturally
fell to the lot of Mrs. Barrett and the taste displayed would
be surprising to 99% of the white people of the country. The
writer has been in numerous Negro homes where a refined,
sensitive, and harmonious sense of the fitness of things is re-
lected in the decorations, furniture, and arrangement of the
house. Too few whites have had this experience. The entire-
 Negro race is judged from a cultural standpoint by the rare
visits to the home of the washerwoman or the cook when she is
ill. This home of Mrs. Barrett might well serve as a model to
the most fastidious. The writer took a young lady born and
reared in Virginia to this home to call this winter and after
the call the young lady and the writer both agreed that there
was less in this home which would jar the most delicate sensi-
tibilities than in the home of the young lady or in the home of
the writer.

Mrs. Schmelz in her annual report for 1927 said about the
memorial cottage,
"The cottage will serve three distinct purposes: First,
a home for Mrs. Barrett; second, a practical house in which
the girls may learn general housework; third, a social center
for the workers at the school."

The home also serves as a guest house where the numerous
distinguished guests are entertained. On a recent visit to the
school an internationally known white woman was a weekend
guest at the school. She confided to the writer that she had
once paid a business visit to the school and that now she has
great difficulty in passing through Virginia without stopping
there for the stimulating contact with the work of the school
and with Mrs. Barrett personally.

This latest addition to the large houses of the campus
is one which serves most admirably the three-fold purpose laid
down by Mrs. Schmelz. Here Mrs. Barrett can retire for thought
and seclusion, to get away for a few hours from the hum of de-
tail which confronts her in her offices in Federation Cottage.
She has a home instead of a dormitory room into which to wel-
come her daughters when they visit her. Here is a laboratory
per excellence for the girls who are to be paroled. Few if any
will go to work in a finer home and assuredly none will go to a
home where higher standards of efficiency, refinement, and
propriety will be upheld. It gives the girls a standard which
will serve them all their lives as something toward which to
work. If the school is to attract young, up-to-date, efficient
workers it must have some such place as the memorial cottage in
which the workers may gather. The school salaries are woefully
small as will be later brought out, the school is situated well
away from any center of activity of an interesting social nature,
and it is thus necessary for the workers to furnish their own
pastimes and amusements. The Barrett home with all its hospitable
atmosphere is a center to which it might well be a privilege for
the workers to look forward to visiting occasionally.
The laundry is the newest building of any size on the place. It is well equipped and with its concrete floor and its clothes lines which can in a few minutes be raised out of the way or with slightly more effort be taken down, makes an admirable place for parties and entertainments of all kinds.

Down under the hill are the old original farm house, used by the farmer and family, and the barn, chicken houses, corn house and the like. A tall water tower and a new septic tank go to make up the rest of the physical plant. Roses and trees as well as all other kinds of flowers and shrubs abound. The girls vie one with the other for the right to share in the upkeep of the gardens. They take a very real pride in their buildings and all the surroundings which go to make up home.

The buildings are kept up fairly well. The superintendent cannot get the money to keep them up as they should be kept up but it is remarkable to see what she can do without money! The girls paint, and paper, and decorate generally inside. They do a very good job of plastering. Mrs. Barrett is not one to let the physical plant run down in spite of the handicap of insufficient funds and one is surprised what a variety of uses can be found for determination.

The soil of the farm was badly mined when the farm was purchased. Margaret Reeves reports in her book that the soil is not fertile. Mrs. Barrett characteristically takes this fact as a challenge and the fertility is constantly being improved. In time if the present good work continues, the soil

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1 Op. cit. p. 122
should be brought back to a much higher degree of productivity. One notes upon approaching the school that it looks like a school. It is separated from the road by a fence covered by vines which add to the beauty of the entire place, but the fence as a fence would be no obstacle to even the more demure of the girls, and then there is always the gate wide open. The buildings themselves look like dormitories and school buildings, no bars to running away to any foot-loose girl except in the case of rooms where girls "choose" to confine themselves for meditation at times. Even the windows in these rooms are free from the conventional bars but are covered by a heavy screening.

Hanover Cottage is the school building of the campus. Here on the first floor we find the two class rooms of the building where the girls meet for their formal class room work and for Sunday school and for church services. The interior of the building may be divided lengthwise for class purposes by means of convenient folding doors. These doors are thrown open when the building is used for assembly purposes. The interior is furnished with taste and the acoustic properties are excellent but the arrangement is at best makeshift and the equipment poor but everything is being got out of it that there is to be got.

The second floor houses the food laboratory in the rear and the clothing and industrial arts work in the front. This building though not well arranged does not present the problem that is presented by the dormitories.

There are but two dormitories for the housing of the hundred odd girls and all the workers. This arrangement savors rather of institutional life than of home life although it would
seem that the home atmosphere is created and preserved to a remarkable degree in the face of overcrowded conditions and in the face of such large units of girls. The ideal arrangement would be a group of smaller cottages where a home atmosphere might be carried out with the advantage of smaller groups and with a housemother who could act more nearly as a mother to the few girls, perhaps ten, who come under her care. This arrangement would not only create an atmosphere much more conducive to reeducation but it would also enable the housemother to have a much more intimate and personal contact with the girls who come under her charge.

From the standpoint of cost the present arrangement is as nearly ideal, perhaps, as it would be possible to get. Each housemother has about all the girls she can see to, thus spreading the overhead more thinly over the girls in figuring per capita costs. If low per capita cost is the ideal toward which to strive, then the school is nearly ideally run, but it would seem that the more intimate contacts between housemother and girls which would be engendered by the small cottage plan would be an arrangement which would pay large dividends in civic results.

The two dormitories are badly overcrowded even as dormitories. With the pressure of courts to take in more and more girls and with the pitifully limited quarters available for the girls, the school is meeting the situation as best it can by crowding into the dormitories more girls than were originally intended. There are several possible solutions to the
problem. The most obvious would be more dormitories. In fact, the State of Virginia could very handily afford to increase the size of the entire plant. One other means of assisting the work of the school would be to provide means elsewhere to take care of the feeble-minded cases which find their way to the industrial school. There are facilities at Petersburg for the care of the feeble minded. It would appear that the Petersburg facilities have reached the limit, so children who are very definitely feeble minded, as low grade as imbeciles, are sent to the industrial school. These girls take room which might better be used by girls with normal intelligence who are equipped to take advantage of the facilities for reeducating for life. These feeble minded should always be institutionalized.

Peak is no place for them and each one who is sent there is keeping out some girl who is able to profit by the training given at the school. A girl who can scarcely be taught to do the simplest sewing has no place at Peak. She should be looked after elsewhere and her place used for some child who can really benefit by the training given.

There is one other addition which should be made to the school. At present there are no facilities for the care of pregnant girls. Girls who are found to be pregnant and who are committed to the school are returned to the State Board of Public Welfare and are thus deprived of the benefits to be had from the school at Peak. It is obviously impossible for such girls to be housed with the other children. They need special care, care which is the envy of the other children. In the minds of the
children who see a pregnant girl receive the finest of everything, there is only one way to get the best and the tendency is for the girl who has thus observed, to as promptly as is possible, either by escape or on parole, to avail herself of the benefits to be derived from pregnancy. This could hardly be classified as one of the greater object lessons to be derived from industrial education.

As things are run, however, there are no facilities for the care of expectant mothers at Peak and this group of girls who should have all the advantages possible in order to be able the better to care for their children after they are born are deprived of the training given at the school. Separate cottage facilities might well be provided for this group of girls. They could be isolated from the other girls in their more intimate home life but could at the same time get the very real benefits of the work of the school. They could be given sympathetic care and guidance and could be properly prepared for motherhood both as far as instruction is concerned and also from the standpoint of a proper mental conditioning. At the same time they could be given the vocational training which the school has to offer.

The plan of confining the unmarried mothers in institutions of this kind is one which is advocated by Margaret Reeves¹ and seems to be in accordance with the best practices in the care of delinquent girls. Until facilities are provided for unmarried mothers at Peak, the present practice will no

doubt continue. Girls are now placed in families where they await confinement uninstructed and without the guidance of the sympathetic companions such as are to be found in a school such as the Virginia Industrial School. They receive no mental preparation for motherhood, no vocational training to fit them for the economic struggle which faces them after confinement, and are not provided with the proper sort of things to occupy their minds while awaiting confinement. A confinement cottage where expectant mothers could be given pre-confinement care and instruction and where mothers could live and receive instruction in vocations and in child care after the child is born and until the mother is prepared to face the world for herself and for her infant is one of the greatest needs of the state and could be best and most inexpensively handled at Peak. The hospital facilities now provided at the school are excellent and the obstetric service could be added with a minimum of cost and the results should be most beneficial to civic moral.

Thus it will be seen that the greatest needs of the school from the standpoint of physical plant are, first, a new and modern class room building. Probably some help from some outside sources, such as the Rosenwald fund, might be secured. Second, additional dormitory space should be provided as has been already discussed. The outline of what should be done in this connection will be found in chapter VIII. Third, the institution should have added to its permanent equipment, facilities for the care of expectant and unmarried mothers.
CHAPTER IV

Financial History of the School

Appendix A presents a summary of the sources of the income of the school by year, shown in terms of percentages. To the State of Virginia should go the admiration of the entire United States for its work in showing the way to the other southern states in the matter of care of delinquent colored girls. It took an extra-state agency to get the work started and to show the way, but after the value of the work had been demonstrated the state took over the institution and now may be justly proud of its record. Anything critical which may be said hereafter about this work need not be taken as an adverse criticism of the state but is merely a cooperative criticism, urging that the state do all within its financial power to keep ahead in the work which it has thus far so liberally sponsored. No adverse criticism is intended when attention is called to the fact that an outside agency showed the way to the State in starting this work. Probably it is best that this work was so started.

The state early aided the Federation, as has already been mentioned, in defraying the maintenance charges of the school.
The Department of Education annually contributes $500 toward teachers' salaries, this amount not being included in the percentage shown in the appendix tables.

The salaries paid at the school are pitifully small. In appendix F, Table 1 is shown a comparison of salaries with salaries in other institutions of this character. Mrs. Barrett has succeeded in surrounding herself with a group of women who, with the training which they have, are most efficient. They are mostly imbued with a real missionary spirit. Operation on a missionary basis may or may not attract the most efficient. Usually such operation attracts some good workers but there is often included a group who are attracted by missionary salaries because of their low earning capacities, and who like to attach themselves to a missionary undertaking so that they may rationalize their inefficiency and consequent low earning capacity.

Margaret Reeves has to say on the importance of adequate salaries in training schools for delinquent girls (pages 91, 92, and 93):

"The whole question of salaries is closely linked to that of personnel. As we have stated previously, the size and quality of a staff constitute the most important factors in the success or failure of a school. Although some of the best work with delinquent girls in this country is being done in schools where salaries are low, because a real missionary spirit prevails, the people of the United States cannot expect to develop or maintain the highest quality of work without adequately compensating those responsible for it. Individuals, because of their devotion and interest, may remain for much less than they are worth, but considering the country as a whole we cannot expect to attract and keep a large group of workers of the highest type if the salaries are not somewhere nearly commensurate with the qualifications demanded.

"Even if it is possible to secure a sufficient number of workers at low salaries, is a state justified in conducting an institution in which employees are not paid what they are worth?"
Many social workers receive less than they could earn in business positions, but at least those engaged in social work for the state should be paid as much as they could secure if they were working for a private social service organization. Although one would like to satisfy the wide spread interest in the salaries that are paid throughout the country, there are certain dangers to be avoided in any attempt to draw comparisons between the different schools. Many factors, however, bear a close relationship to rates of salaries paid.

FACTORS RELATED TO SALARY STANDARDS

"Size of School. In the larger institutions higher salaries may be paid without raising the per capita cost for the children in care to an unreasonable sum. If these same salaries were paid to specialists in very small schools, the per capita cost might be prohibitive. There are some small institutions, however, where remuneration is adequate, especially for certain positions; also there are some salaries in large institutions which come near the bottom of the salary list. Superintendents and cottage matrons tend to have larger salaries in the larger schools, while the salaries of academic teachers show no consistent tendency to vary with the size of the school.

"Age of School. A new school must often demonstrate first, with little money, what should be done for its pupils before an adequate appropriation is obtainable. However, a school founded on new ideas and under the direction of a progressive board, sometimes meets more fully than does an older one the need for sufficient compensation.

"Type of Control. Sometimes a private or semi-private institution is not so well supplied with funds as a state training school; but there is often greater freedom of the board in a private organization to combine positions and salaries and to make other adjustments than is possible in public institutions of larger resources.

"State of Social Development Reached by a State. In those states where there is wider acceptance of the idea that the treatment of juvenile delinquency is a higher specialized task, it is less difficult to secure adequate salaries for trained workers than in states where most of the population still considers a training school primarily a place for detention and custodial care.

"Wealth of the Body of Citizens. At the time of our visits to these schools, some of the southern and western states were in difficult financial circumstances, with bank failure. Citizens hard pressed are not likely to approve increased appropriations for salaries of workers in state institutions. The support of such institutions is often closely allied with methods and rates of taxation. Much outside capital may be invested by companies that pay relatively small taxes. This matter is a technical one requiring much study. In some cases larger
appropriations probably cannot be expected until there is a change in the taxation system.

"Section of Country Where an Institution Is Located. Certain types of workers are generally paid less, for example, in the South than in the East. The rates in the different sections are also affected by the general salary situation outside the institution.

"Number of Available Trained Workers. Schools far from a source of supply may be obliged to pay relatively high salaries to secure specialists."

Relative to positions where the salaries are especially inadequate in the country in general, Margaret Reeves has to say, on pages 107, 108 of her book:

"For some positions salaries commonly paid seem especially inadequate. As we have already noted, the average amount paid the superintendent of a training school for white girls in the United States in 1921 was only $2,063 (one-fourth receiving not more than $1,650 and three-fourths not more than $2400), and if the schools for colored girls are added to this group the average for the position is reduced to $1,946. This is considerably less than the salary average for a superintendent of a training school for boys. An average of less than $2,100 a year for a woman capable of planning and directing the study, treatment, reeducation, and readjustment of delinquent girls, with whom all other agencies have failed, is obviously too low. Such a woman must have knowledge of many subjects and understand the scientific aspects of this technical task. She should also be a good executive. These qualifications should command fitting compensation.

"Another group that is noticeably underpaid is that of the cottage mothers. These women who live close to the girls and hence probably have more opportunity than have most of the other workers to help form their characters, received an average salary in the United States in 1921 for the schools for white and for white and colored girls of only $724 a year, one-fourth receiving not more than $605 and three-fourths not more than $820. When schools for colored girls are included the average falls to $695 a year. If we wish to secure and keep as cottage mothers, not worn-out housekeepers who emphasize to the exclusion of many other things immaculate floors and smooth beds, but women of culture and training, who can put into daily practice the ideals of a progressive superintendent, we must pay salaries above those given to domestics. Moreover, a cottage mother's social position on the staff and her free time should be equal to that of other workers, for example, teachers. The superintendent alone cannot carry out her program. On no group must she place more dependence than upon cottage mothers or matrons.

"The academic teachers also are not well paid, although

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their compensation is a little more nearly adequate than that of the matrons. The salary averages of academic teachers, principals of academic schools, physical or recreation directors and parole agents are appreciably lower than for similar positions in the boys' schools. While cottage matrons in the schools for girls are paid more than are the women with that title in the boys' schools, the latter occupy subordinate positions, rendering a somewhat different type of service, and the salaries are not really comparable.¹

The South has been very much behind the rest of the country in the matter of salaries in the past, but has shown recently the results of a hopeful awakening. In 1915 66% of the salaries of the employees of southern industrial institutions for delinquent girls were more than 10% below average for the entire country, while but 14% were above average. In 1921, however, but 39% were more than 10% below average while 31% were more than 10% above.² In order, however, for Virginia to maintain the lead which it has so far shown, it must take into very serious consideration the entire salary scale at the institution for colored girls.

A glance at appendix F will show that the school compares very favorably with averages, but favorable comparison with the average institution is not a thing of which to boast. The average is poor in this case and the quality of work, if it is to be maintained, should be stimulated by appreciable salary increases.

In considering the salaries paid at the institution at Peak in the light of the various factors related to salary standards, the school under discussion should be classed as a

¹ Ibid.

² Figures derived from table on page 106, Training Schools for Delinquent Girls.
fair sized school. The school has had a career extending over a period of fifteen years and has won nation-wide recognition as to the quality of work done. The institution is state controlled and is therefore not hampered by the restrictions of an income limited by private subscription. At the same time the combining of positions, which is spoken of as a means of offering larger salaries, has been carried out, in some cases too far for the good of the work. The State of Virginia shows some evidence of highly developed consciousness in social matters. The state is large and the population is unusually diversified as to civic consciousness. With the intelligent leadership evidenced by the excellent laws on the statute books of the state, there seems to be the possibility of furthering the work already started. Virginia was not hit hard by the recent financial and industrial depression, as compared with many other states. She felt the cotton bank failures little and, in fact, has a very stable state income. The body of citizens may not be considered as wealthy when compared with the citizens of many other states but they are wealthy enough to provide for the furthering of social reforms which are, in reality, not in the long run expensive. While Virginia is in the South, she is not beset by the infirmities which so often characterize southern states. Salaries are low in Virginia in many cases, but since the state is situated so far north and has good educational facilities available, the salary scale of social workers should be relatively high. Certainly Virginia cannot rationalize a low salary scale on the plea of southern influence.
The difficulty of securing properly trained workers is complicated by the racial aspect of the school, but there are in the South two very fine social work schools for Negroes, one in Raleigh, North Carolina, and another in Atlanta, Georgia, while there are numerous Negro women being trained in the social schools of the North, notably the New York school.

The salaries paid teachers in Virginia are notably small. This condition probably is the result of an over-supply of teachers of poor and mediocre grade, contentment with this class of teachers, and of the fact that teaching is traditionally the profession open to young ladies in the state. The fact of small salaries for teachers affects salaries for women generally throughout the state. The workers of the Peak school being colored, their salary scale is further lowered by the fact that lower salaries are paid to Negroes than to whites regardless of ability.

The State could rationalize itself out of raising salaries at the school. The courageous and foresighted thing would be to go on with the work progressively, doing a really worthwhile bit of pioneer work. The school is doing without a trained psychiatrist, a resident dentist, a resident doctor, and specialist teachers. The school is probably too small to employ such specialists at this stage of development, but salaries of the essential personnel should be raised to enable the superintendent to gather about her a more thoroughly trained corps.

The superintendent's salary compares unfavorably with that of the usual superintendent of similar institutions—superintendents
of the usual order. The Superintendent of this institution is nationally known as an authority in her field, being, for example, a member of the White House Conference called by President Hoover as a sub-committee of the "crime commission". Mrs. Barrett has refused offers of positions in world-wide famous institutions because she has preferred to continue her labor of love at Peak. Such willingness to sacrifice was never given with a thought as to compensation, but that is no reason why the State for which she has done so much should not see that she is paid a more nearly adequate salary.

Reference to Appendix F, Tables 2 and 3 will show the real story of the efficiency with which the Virginia school is run from the standpoint of salaries. During the year for which Margaret Reeves' figures were taken, the school under study had a per capita salary rate in the lowest group even in the southern states. When this fact is considered in connection with the statement quoted from her book, the statement being based upon her conclusions drawn at the time she secured her statistics, the real efficiency of the school shows itself. One does not wonder that Mrs. Falconer was able to say that the money spent on the school by the government was spent in the most efficient manner of any money given to any school in the country.
CHAPTER V

The Development of the Staff

Something of the staff and its accomplishments and efficiency was necessarily commented on in the chapter devoted to salaries. The fact was intimated that the staff is, as a whole, untrained prior to taking up the work at the school. The task of training workers on the job is one which takes much time and energy, time and energy which could be put to better use along other lines. Just as long, however, as the salaries paid are so inadequate, it is impossible to secure thoroughly trained persons to fill positions on the staff.

The training of the founder and present superintendent has been sufficiently commented upon. She secured her training in the school of experience, taking to her work at the school when it was founded a training and personality which admirably fitted her for the success which she has attained in her chosen field of endeavor. Her interest in the school is such that she is, no doubt, a permanent fixture in her work. She has been offered such attractive positions, as for instance, the position of Dean of Women at Tuskegee and has refused them. In case she were to be lost to the school, however, the task of
finding anyone to fill her position would be most difficult. The person must necessarily have had a most unusual type of training and would almost necessarily have to be attracted to the work by large and generous salary offers.

The position of assistant-superintendent is at present filled by a woman whose training, like that of the superintendent, is largely practical. In filling her position, the necessity of a very real salary increase in order to secure a woman to take over her work would present a problem. It would be most difficult for the superintendent to train another person entirely in the field with the demands now made upon her time and energy. The experience which would be lacking in a new assistant-superintendent would have to be made up in formal training and with some experience, at least, in another institution.

The job of training cottage matrons is a very difficult one and takes much time and energy. With the salaries paid at present it is most difficult to secure women of the peculiarly essential characteristics and training needed in this work. The first essential to be sought in a housemother would seem to be a social viewpoint. Most women who would be attracted by the salaries paid at the school would not have the necessary point of view toward delinquent girls; neither would they have the ability to give the girls the proper type of training. The sense of values of such women would not be all that could be desired. It is possible to secure housekeepers of a sort, but to secure women whose personalities are such as to enable them
to act as mothers to the girls sent to Peak, whose refinement is such that the girls can set her up as an ideal is a very difficult task. The ability to teach, and teach all day long, not only by explanation and leadership but also by example, is another seeming essential of the cottage matron. She should be firm, yet kind; she should be a woman after whom the girls may copy, yet she should possess understanding and sympathy. A young woman seemingly would not do for this position; preferably, too, she should be a mother, or one in whom the sense of motherhood is well developed.

The task of finding women with all these and other qualifications is indeed a difficult one. Training is essential, either previous to employment or subsequent to it. Mrs. Barrett has usually been fortunate in securing women who approach the ideals required but at other times she has been less fortunate. A woman who seems to possess the qualifications may be careless as a housekeeper, may develop into a matron who is interested only in externals. She may not be able to understand and control the girls, and the coming of each new matron signals to the girls the task of finding out just how far they can go with the newcomer. The new matron may start well and later develop into a trouble maker among the girls, not backing the superintendent in her policies. On the other hand, she may be non-cooperative because she thinks the superintendent too easy with "bad" girls. The ills which often beset a person who has become institutionalized all lie in wait for the worker in the Virginia school.
It is apparent that in filling a position as cottage matron it is necessary to find someone who possesses some of the qualities needed and who potentially is capable of development along other lines. Then the task of training begins. The matron must be developed in the fields in which she is lacking while at the same time she must be held to standard in the ways in which she was seeming previously qualified. After a prolonged period of trial and training it may be found that she cannot be brought to the general standard required and the task must be started over once again with no certainty of success. As has already been stated, the position of cottage matron, next to the position of superintendent, is the position most difficult to fill, as it is the matron who is in closest contact with the girls and it is she whose influence upon the girls is the most direct and important.

In a school such as the Virginia Industrial School where so much has to be done by example, where instruction is a matter of all day long, the workers in all fields have to be teachers. The laundry help, the farm help, the secretary to the superintendent, the nurse, everybody, in fact, must be classed as teachers. Hence, a laundry worker cannot be just another laundry worker, but must be a teacher, possess a social perspective, be an example to the girls, and must in every way occupy a position of great importance and be a woman of character. By the same token, a farmer cannot be just a farmer, nor a secretary just a secretary. The employment problem, then, is greatly complicated by the peculiar nature of the work as is the case in
all correctional schools. Problem children must have superior advantages because they are handicapped at the start. The feeling generally prevails that almost anything is good enough for delinquents, when, as a matter of fact, the best is hardly good enough. With the need as it is, and with the public viewpoint as it is, the task of attracting well trained workers is most difficult for salary reasons and other considerations.

The task of securing a well-trained staff for the Virginia Industrial School with all its complications is unusually difficult. It is little short of marvelous that the superintendent has secured the very fine type of worker that she has secured. Her task would be made more easy and her energies would be released for other purposes if she were, through a higher salary scale, enabled to compete at a higher level for her personnel.

The task of securing well-trained academic teachers presents approximately the same problem although it is seemingly somewhat less acute as it is possible to secure persons who have had teacher training. Here again, though, the feeling that the best is not essential for the problem child is reflected through the salary scale. The school must compete with other institutions and schools for teachers who are peculiarly trained and otherwise conditioned for work with problem children. In this competition it is hampered by a low salary budget.

The problem of turnover is one which gives great concern but the school has been in many ways very fortunate. This good fortune has been due to the ability of the present superintendent to attract to her a high grade of worker at a relatively low
salary and to imbue that worker with something of the spirit of the founder. Were the superintendent able to compete at a higher salary level, however, the problem of tenure would be gratifyingly modified. Turnover in a school such as this one where so much personal attention is necessary in order to condition a new worker is a very expensive proposition both financially and from the standpoint of a weakened efficiency.

The time of everyone is so filled, that work of an essential nature must be neglected in order to take the time to train new workers, thus lowering appreciably the quality of work done.

On page 68 of her book, Training Schools for Delinquent Girls, Margaret Reeves says:

"An adequate number of employees is a need only second in importance to their quality. There will be definite limits to what highly trained employees can accomplish if their number is too small. In dealing with unadjusted girls individual contact is of fundamental importance. This can be provided satisfactorily only where the staff approaches adequacy. If girls are handled en masse, we must expect few permanent adjustments."¹

More will later be said relative to the fact that the Virginia Industrial School is understaffed. Probably this condition of too few workers to carry on the work satisfactorily is one of the gravest dangers faced by the superintendent.

Certain specific recommendations for augmenting the staff will be made later.

The qualities which should be possessed by workers in re-educational institutions are discussed by Margaret Reeves, pages 72 and 73.² She does not pretend to evaluate the various

¹ Ibid.
² Ibid.