

tude of the Juvenile Court is benignant, paternal, salvatory, and for these reasons more efficiently corrective. The Criminal Court is merely a vestibule to the Reform School. The Reform School is looked on by the Juvenile Court as, not a first, but a last resort, to be invoked only when the Court itself has tried and failed. The spirit of the Court is always that of a wise and kind, though firm and stern, father. The question is not, "What has this child done?" But, "How can this child be saved?"

By far the most important element in the system is probation. It is the keystone of the arch. Without it the Juvenile Court would be almost powerless for good. With it, and nothing else, a vast amount can be done. You cannot deal with children as a class. You must deal with them as individuals. You must win the confidence, the respect, even the love of each individual child, would you make of it what you desire it to be. It is the personal touch that counts, and that touch is supplied by the Probation Officer.

The duties of the Probation Officer are three-fold: before trial, at trial, and after trial.

As soon as a child is arrested, or informed against, a Probation Officer is at once notified. Her first duty is to see the child as a friend, to get its confidence, and to hear its story. She then visits its home, school, or place of employment, and any other place where information about its habits and its history may be obtained.

Recognizing that the child is the product of its environment, she endeavours to put her finger on the cause of its ill-doing. The home surroundings, the condition and disposition of the parents, are ascertained, and the information put at the disposal of the Judge.

In the Court the Probation Officer appears to represent the child, as friend, though not as excuser. She represents to the Judge the course which the result of her enquiries has led the Juvenile Court Committee to consider would be for the best interest of the child. In most cases the issue will be the release of the child on probation in charge of the officer. The Judge takes advantage of the occasion to make as strong an impression as possible on the mind of the child, and the Probation Officer seizes on this precious psychological moment, immediately after the trial, to deepen