

Dawn of Tomorrow

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JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

(By A. H. GARRATT, 360 Grey St. London, Ont.)

Much has been said regarding juvenile delinquency, but is it really the fault of the children of today? In many instances, parents take too little interest in their children's physical and spiritual welfare. The moulding of the child's character is left to already overburdened teachers in the schools.

A child's mind is like a sponge, absorbing any new idea, and its mind can easily become warped through associating with others of low moral calibre, especially so when they lack the guidance of wise parents.

What, then, can be done to improve these deplorable conditions? The Bible says, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth betimes." The rod and reproof give wisdom! But a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." The lack of reasoning as contained in these two verses from the book of Proverbs illustrates why we have juvenile delinquency as one of our major problems today.

Modern parents are only too willing to leave their children to themselves. Taking the easy course, they leave them to their own diversions. Consequently, a child has to find some outlet to exhaust its exuberant energy. This form of expression maybe, in part, a retaliation against a too strict parental control, as well as laxity on the part of the parents who make no effort to control their children and go to the absurd extreme and allow them unlimited freedom. Without wise counselling and guidance to recognize right from wrong, a child is easily led astray.

To combat juvenile delinquency, a middle course must be adopted, whereby the child finds trust, love, and understanding. A child needs parents to whom it can take its troubles, knowing fully that they will be listened to and not be held to ridicule or turned away because the parents cannot be bothered to listen to them.

Discipline is a necessity, but, tempered with love and understanding, will be far more effective than harsh words and whippings. To make this possible, parents require patience and a mind that can reach into a child's innermost thoughts.

Organizations like the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. are an asset in combatting juvenile delinquency. Children can join for a small fee. The clubs facilities can be enjoyed by all. Gymnasiums and sports help the body. Crafts train the hands and minds of both sexes. Lastly, but equally as important, there are services to further the teachings of Christ.

All this is a great help in overcoming and combatting juvenile delinquency, but cannot be compared with proper parental control, and instruction in the finer things of life. Among the few great things that life can offer to a child is the security that is to be found in the home where there is happiness.

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