

Dorothy Knox

Our Forgotten Children On The Square

IN VIEW of the fact that I am merely a newspaper columnist and not an authority on the problem of the feeble-minded child, I want to back up the column I have been writing and the Resolutions of the Wilmington Post of the American Legion on the same subject, by quoting from trained experts whose business it is to deal with these conditions in our state.

BACK IN 1924

P. M. Register, superintendent of Caswell Training School for Mental Defectives wrote in his printed report: "In view of the fact that we expect every Legislature to read this report, I am going to briefly state the needs of your State Institution as far as we are employed here, see it." There followed a list of a dozen needs. It began:

1. "There are over 700 children on our waiting list, therefore I recommend more room."

BACK IN 1938

Mrs. W. T. Bost, Commissioner, State Board of Public Welfare, wrote in his printed report: "Would recommend that the Caswell Training School be not further enlarged, but that another school of like kind be established in the Western part of the state. It does not seem to matter how large you make a college, but it does matter about a training school for retarded children. Each individual child must have personal attention. . . . Our waiting list consists of 1,200 children that we have no room for."

Back in 1940

W. C. Ezell, Director, Division of Institutions and Corrections, State Board of Public Welfare, wrote: "The report of the N. C. Charitable, Penal and Correctional Institutions: Via the case for the feeble-minded the need for more facilities is very pressing. Making the very lowest figures in estimating this need, Caswell Training School cannot care for more than one-half the URGENT cases of white children, and there is no provision for Negro mental defectives except in the hospital for the insane."

Also in 1940

W. T. Parrott, Superintendent, Caswell Training School, wrote in his report: "The most pressing need is for more dormitory space. On account of the urgency of applications I have exhausted every available space and at this particular moment we are operating with 72 children beyond safe cubic air space limits. This I have been

to the Governor's commission appointed to study the care of the sane and mental defectives in 1937 that 2,700 are in need of institutional care. This means that facilities should be made available for over 2,000 such cases. At present there are facilities for only 800 (see Char.) An urgent appeal should be made to the General Assembly to meet the needs of this group more adequately."

Also in 1942

Miss Hanes Clement, former Director of the Social Service Department of the Memorial Hospital, made a six months' comprehensive survey of conditions in this state, and then wrote a paper on "The Hopeless Plight of the Feeble-minded in North Carolina." She sums up:

1. Rube the per capita allowance of Caswell Training

SUDDEN MEMORY: The scandals that rocked our small town and the how the grownups either talked in whispers or chased me from the room when they wanted to talk about things they thought I shouldn't know. But somehow we children always found out. I remember how a well-to-do widow of 55 married a young grocery clerk who was 21. She held the purse strings and things that were quite uncomfortable for her. After three years of it he suddenly disappeared and has not been heard from to this day. The women giggled and the men said he ought to have gone three years sooner. . . . Then there was the Federal game warden who lost his job when the Governor at head and guns. The "boatman" it had been paying for him was a young woman in town no one had suspected of anything except the very best of behavior because she talked like a man and wore strictly tailored clothes. . . . Then, of course, there was the preacher who left town in a hurry and much whispering about how a judge's wife had caused his temporary fall from grace. He got another church in another town and the last I heard of him he was doing all right.

PAUL

THERE WERE, of course, a few characters who were exempt from the tongues of gossips. They were lost souls, anyhow, so anything they did toward hastening their journey to the nether world was of little consequence. Chief among these was Old Bill Parker, the town drunkard. Personally, I don't think Old Bill ever did anything really bad, unless being addicted to canned beer was a mortal sin.

A GRASS WIDOW came to live in our town for a while, but she didn't stay. For one thing, any man who as much as tipped his hat to her was suspected of something. I never did learn exactly what. And women had nothing to do with her. No one ever said down and told me exactly what it was she had done that put her beyond the pale, but I gathered it was something terrible. Now I know that the poor woman must have been mischievous and not even Ben Douglas would have the heart to label the town "friendless." And then there was a school teacher I liked, but she taught only one term. Her young man took her out one evening and didn't bring her back until midnight. Next day she changed boarding places. It was near the end of the term, so the school board let her stay on, but didn't re-allow her to walk the straight and narrow. Unless you could afford frequent trips to St. Louis, where no one knew you.

Gallantry Didn't Pay

Little Rock Police

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.—(AP)—Police arrested a youth on a traffic violation and he was arrested. It offered a ride into town for his fifteen-year-old girl friend.

Encouraging the young man to headquarter, they heard the sound of breaking glass coming from the direction of their squad car. By the time they could hurry back to it, she had broken all the windows except the rear one and was aiming an attack at it.

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7:15 World News Roundup

7:30 M. A. G. G. G.

7:45 Do You Remember?

8:00 Your Landmark

8:15 Everything Goes

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