



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
STATE LIBRARY
HARRISBURG

My dear Miss Jones:

Miss Young has asked me to write you a few of my experiences which occurred while I was organizing a library in the Penna. Industrial School at Huntingdon. These experiences were so many and so varied it is hard to discriminate, however, I shall relate some which you may be able to use in your Prison edition of the Library Journal. As you know my work at this Reformatory was exceedingly interesting, however, as it was my first experience in such a school everything was experimental. Even though many of my experiments took no end of time and trouble I always felt repaid by the eager and instantaneous response as well as the very frank appreciation with which everything was received. Indeed, it was an experience never to be regretted, nor forgotten.

I expect to be in New England in a few weeks and should I get to Boston hope I may have the pleasure of meeting you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Dorothy Randolph'.

Dorothy Randolph.

Penn. *Think I sent you first sheet?* *Huntington*

I had been given to understand the inmates of this institution were all quite lacking in education so was greatly surprised one day to have a boy ask me for Robinson's "Practical psychology" and Fosdick's "Twelve tests of character". This boy was soon sent to help me in the library and I learned he was a graduate of a state normal school. He had been rather forced into his crime and it is to be hoped will be paroled very soon. However, I found he had a very keen interest in psychology - especially in its abnormal phases - and here he was given a very good chance to study some real cases as well as any books which I might be able to obtain for him.

One of the most enjoyable periods of my work came on Saturday morning when I held what was fast developing into a regular story hour. This all began by my chance relating to a group of boys, of one chapter of a serial treasure hunt which was being shown at a local movie house. These boys were so interested that the next week they brought friends with the result that each Friday evening I spent in seeing the "next installment". As these installments were short the boys began to ask for more stories and I found them eager listeners. Gradually, I included stories other than wild west or detective, especially bits from history ^{or} from the lives of famous men and women. I later tried the idea of beginning a story and then putting a few copies on the library table for them to take and read the ending. The result was very gratifying for many not only finished the story but asked for other works by the same authors.

One of the most difficult things with which I had to contend was the number of boys who came to the library with a desire for books

books but with no knowledge of reading. I worried a great deal over this until I struck the idea of scrap books. I spent many evenings clipping old magazines and making up these scrap books. Some - just pictures of dogs, or airplanes, or automobiles, etc. and others with pictures related so as to make a story - some with no captions and others with very simple ones. These became very popular not only with the non-reading class but with the others, also. The rotogravure sections of Sunday newspapers, especially the New York Times, supplied no end of amusement and often led to requests for books on subjects which the pictures suggested.

One of the most pleasing experiences came most unexpectedly when a boy who was ready to go out on parole came to say goodbye and thank me for the good books I had given him to read. He ~~and~~ ended by expressing a desire to be able to read further when he arrived in his home town. I gave him a letter to his librarian and later learned he was an ardent and faithful borrower where once he had been a "perfect pest."