

**WINNING  
THE BOY**

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Winning the Boy by Lilburn Merrill & Judge Ben. B. Lindsey

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**LILBURN MERRILL & JUDGE BEN. B. LINDSEY**

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With an Introduction by  
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## INTRODUCTION

**T**HERE is unquestionably a crying need for books on the boy problem. It is hardly necessary any longer to emphasize its importance. There is a real demand for practical, helpful advice in dealing with the sacred subject of childhood.

Reformation has been attempted through outward influences, frequently embracing force and violence. The criminal court, the jail, the prison, are all institutions designed originally to bring about reformation. They did nothing of the kind. They perhaps protected society and, as believed by some, furnished an example to the individual that acted as a deterrent to crime. But every worker for childhood, whether the father in the home, the teacher in the school, the probation officer or the judge of the juvenile court—all are agreed that formation is the thing that we most need in dealing with the human character, and formation comes from within



through the human heart and not from without through iron bars or any other methods of force and violence, whether nagging and faultfinding in the home or detention behind stone walls. Mankind must be redeemed through love, and love works through the human heart, and the ennobling emotions of the human heart are aroused through the personal touch, contact, and influence of individuals whose hearts beat true to the higher things of life.

Back of the scheme of formation, or, if you would have it, reformation, known as the juvenile court, is one continual struggle to put a little love into the law. Some one has said that "Love without justice may be sentiment and weakness," but there can be no real justice without love.

There is no created thing more marvellous than the budding child. Love and hate, peace and fear, pleasure and pain, despair and hope—all these wonderful emotions of the human soul are there, and how we have gone ahead in our blind, brutal way, of dealing with the "thing"—an act by the individual

—and not with the divine creature made up of all these wonderful pulsations of the human heart, is one of the most brutal, barbarous things in the history of jurisprudence.

When you seek to win a boy, go after his heart. But you can't get his heart by sending him to jail ; and you can't win him by an act which is puerile or weak. Learn to sympathize. Sympathy is the divinest quality of the human heart. It was the secret of the winnings of our Master when He trod the earth ; but no one ever accused Him of defending or justifying sin.

I believe I know that erring youth as a rule cannot be brought to truth and light through the ways of force and violence, of hate and despair, and, on general principles, every method which is backed by these hideous monsters is false and bad. It may furnish a short cut but it is a dangerous path. Its effect is temporary, not lasting, and it has no permanent winnings, for, like the disease dosed with bad medicine, if it disappears we know it did not disappear because of the dosing but in spite of it. The real cure is a change some-

where in the human heart. But if the real change comes it comes through the spark of love from somewhere because of a conviction from within that evil is bad and must be cast out.

The boys who are really reformed are those who want to do right and not those who have to do right. Society may be protected as long as they have to do right ; but you have not a really safe citizen until there comes into the boy's heart the desire to do right because it is right. I have visited the jail in nearly every large city in this country, and have talked to the boys in those jails. I find they are the victims largely of fear, and fear comes from an undeveloped heart. I ask the boy why he will not steal again and he invariably replies, " Because I will get in jail." He is afraid of a jail ; he is not afraid to do wrong. A boy can be taught to do right because it is right ; but that kind of teaching deals with the heart rather than the head. If he has been taught rightly and effectively, he will not answer as a boy did last week when I asked him why he did not tell his father the truth. He said, " Because