

CHAP. 847.—An Act To enlarge the powers of the courts of the District of Columbia in cases involving delinquent children, and for other purposes.

March 3, 1901.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the judges of the criminal and police courts of the District of Columbia are hereby authorized and empowered, at their discretion, to commit to the custody and care of the Board of Children's Guardians of the District of Columbia children under seventeen years of age who shall be convicted of petty crimes or misdemeanors which may be punishable with fine or imprisonment; and said Board of Children's Guardians shall place, under contract, such children in such suitable homes, institutions, or training schools for the care of children as it may deem wise and proper.

District of Columbia. Board of Children's Guardians to have custody of children under 17 years committing minor offenses.

—disposition of children.

SEC. 2. That no court shall commit a child under seventeen years of age, charged with or convicted of a petty crime or misdemeanor punishable by a fine or imprisonment, to a jail, workhouse, or police station, but if such child be unable to give bail or pay a fine, it may be committed to the Board of Children's Guardians temporarily or permanently, in the discretion of the court, and said board shall make some suitable provision for said child outside the inclosure of any jail, workhouse, or police station, or said court may commit such child to the Reform School under the laws now providing for such commitment.

No jail commitments, etc.

SEC. 3. That for the purpose of aiding the court in a proper disposition of cases referred to in section one the Board of Children's Guardians is hereby authorized and directed to designate one of its employees as a probation officer, whose duty shall be to make such investigation in cases involving children under seventeen years of age as the court may direct, to be present in court in order to represent the interests of the child when the case is heard, to furnish the court such information and assistance as the judge may require, and to take charge of any child before and after trial as may be directed by the court.

Probation officer, duties, etc.

SEC. 4. That any person within the District of Columbia, of sufficient financial ability, who shall refuse or neglect to provide for any child under the age of fourteen years, of which he or she shall be the parent or guardian, such food, clothing, and shelter as will prevent the suffering and secure the safety of such child, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be subject to punishment by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in the workhouse of the District of Columbia for not more than three months, or both such fine and imprisonment.

Nonsupport by parent, etc.

—penalty.

SEC. 5. That whenever petition or information shall have been filed in any court of the District of Columbia authorized to commit children to the care, custody, and guardianship of the Board of Children's Guardians for such commitment of any child, and upon the hearing of the same before said court it shall appear to the satisfaction of the court that such child is entitled to be committed as aforesaid under or by virtue of any of the provisions of the Act of Congress approved July twenty-sixth, eighteen hundred and ninety-two, entitled "An Act to provide for the care of dependent children in the District of Columbia and to create a Board of Children's Guardians," and if said evidence tends to show that such child has a father or a mother, either of whom is able to contribute to the support of such child, either by reason of having means or property or having an income consisting of wages or salary due for personal services or labor or otherwise, but fails or neglects so to do, then the proper prosecuting officer shall file in the police court of the District of Columbia an information charging said father or mother, or both, with such failure or neglect, and upon conviction thereof the said court shall require the father or the mother of such child, or both such father and mother, to contribute by stated

Order for contribution for maintenance against parent, etc.

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payments, to be made to said Board of Children's Guardians, toward the support of such child such sum or sums, monthly, weekly, or otherwise, as in the judgment of said court either or both such father and mother should and may be able to pay; and the courts aforesaid may at any time hear and determine any petition for an order for contribution toward maintenance of any child who has heretofore been or who may hereafter be committed to the guardianship of the Board of Children's Guardians, or for modifying or suspending the operation of any such order previously made.

Penalty for neglect to pay for maintenance.

—additional imprisonment for continued neglect.

Proviso. Suspension of sentence on filing bond, etc.

SEC. 6. That any person against whom an order for contribution toward maintenance may have been made, as provided for in this Act, who shall refuse or neglect to make such payments as ordered, shall be deemed guilty of contempt, and upon conviction thereof shall be sentenced to suffer imprisonment in the workhouse of the District of Columbia for not less than three months nor more than one year; and such imprisonment shall not exempt such person from additional imprisonment for further neglect or refusal to make contribution as aforesaid: *Provided, however,* That if, after such conviction, any such parent shall appear before the court before which such conviction shall have taken place and shall show to the satisfaction of the court that the amount due under such order, up to the time of conviction, has been paid, and further, with good and sufficient surety, to be approved by said court, shall enter into bond to the United States in the penal sum of five hundred dollars, conditioned that he will thereafter pay such sums as may have been ordered or that may thereafter be ordered to be paid by said court until such order shall be revoked, the said court may suspend sentence therein during the continuance of such bond.

Disbursing officer of board. Payments, etc., by.

SEC. 7. That the disbursing officer of the Board of Children's Guardians shall receive and shall be responsible under his bond for all moneys paid to said board under the provisions of this Act, and shall pay the amounts so received by him into the Treasury of the United States within twenty days after the close of each fiscal quarter.

Repeal. Effect.

SEC. 8. That all Acts and portions of Acts inconsistent with the provisions mentioned above are hereby repealed, and the terms of the provisions in the above sections shall become law on and after the date of approval.

Approved, March 3, 1901.

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CHAP. 848.—An Act Authorizing and directing the Secretary of the Treasury to deliver to the mayor and city council of Baltimore, Maryland, Ionic columns.

Baltimore, Md. Delivery to, authorized of certain relics of old custom-house.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to deliver to the mayor and city council of Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, the twelve columns now in the custom-house of said city, in order that said columns may be placed in one of the public parks or places of said Baltimore City as a relic or remembrance of said custom-house, which is to be torn down and removed to make way for a new building to be erected.

Approved, March 3, 1901.