

Age of Offenders.—Set out below is a table showing for the past ten years the number of offenders under the various age-groups:—

Age-group.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.
Under 20 ..	115	123	178	203	201	308	354	283	254	294
20-25 ..	303	362	424	348	478	749	639	506	524	698
25-30 ..	282	321	413	322	405	531	396	354	343	341
30-40 ..	456	555	612	492	533	709	490	461	470	412
40 and upwards	831	861	875	833	745	732	603	495	473	468
Not stated ..	4	2	3	3	7	..	..	..	1	..
Totals ..	1,991	2,224	2,505	2,201	2,369	3,029	2,482	2,099	2,065	2,213

It is interesting to note that whereas in the early years of the decade the number of older offenders predominated, more particularly those over forty, in the past few years these have lessened and the groups under twenty-five years of age have shown an upward trend. It is found with many Borstal lads and young offenders that they go through a period of adolescent and post-adolescent instability, but that under discipline, especially a pedagogy of encouragement, they settle down and ultimately become absorbed as useful and self-reliant members of the community, never being heard of again criminally. The table reveals that a larger number are not now qualifying through from age-group to age-group as repetitive criminals. This is further evidenced by the results in general, for it is to be noted that less than 25 per cent. of persons sentenced to reformatory detention or substantial terms of imprisonment offend again after release by the Prisons Board, and also for the past twenty-five years less than 20 per cent. of those who have passed through the Borstal establishments have appeared before the Court to face a subsequent charge.

MISCELLANEOUS

Deaths.—There were 2 deaths recorded during the year, 1 from heart-disease and the other as the result of an accident.

Escapes.—During the year 23 prisoners and 28 Borstal detainees escaped from custody. All have since been recaptured. Twenty of the Borstal escapees were from the Arohata Borstal Institution, where inmates on first reception, in the majority of cases, suffer from emotional instability and some experience difficulty in settling down. It is rare that these girls commit further offences when at large.

Mental Defectives.—A total of 15 persons were transferred from prisons and Borstals to the various mental hospitals, 3 under section 34, 4 under section 37, and 8 under section 38.

Borstal Receptions.—A total of 156 male and 17 female Borstal detainees were received direct from the Courts, whilst 5 girls were transferred to Borstal who were found to be unmanageable at child welfare institutions.

Courts-martial.—During the year 41 courts-martial prisoners were received.

HEALTH OF PRISONERS

The general health of prisoners has been good. There were 87 males and 12 females admitted to the public hospitals or prison infirmaries during the year. The daily average on the sick-list throughout all institutions was 20·70, which is slightly below 2 per cent. of the daily average number of prisoners in custody. The low incidence of sickness among the prisoners may be ascribed to the orderly routine and the well-balanced and wholesome diet. There were 3 prisoners who adopted a "hunger strike" during the year, 1 as a protest against his conviction by a jury, and 2 who were under sentence of life imprisonment for murder, because they were not assigned to work where security considerations were less exacting. In each case the prisoners were placed under medical care, and shortly abandoned their attitude.