

system is based on the belief that young offenders need to be helped and guided rather than subjected to punitive treatment. Rigid discipline and strict routine are not enough. The programme must be designed with a view to bringing out the best in each individual. There must be a certain amount of liberty and freedom of choice, with the consequent possibility of error and wrong decision. There must be room for mistakes, for it is by making mistakes and seeing the error of his ways that the individual learns to do better. No claim can be made that every boy who passes through the institution is completely cured of his criminal propensities, but it is a fact that every lad benefits from his period of detention and goes out with a better moral outlook and healthier social attitudes than when admitted. In some cases lads may seem to have been released on licence too soon, but that is a risk that must be taken, for the dangers arising out of holding the individual in an institution too long are just as great as the risk of releasing too soon.

A recent study of the statistics covering the ten-year period 1938-47 reveals that more than 54 per cent. of the inmates admitted and released during that period have not offended again. The figures are as follows :—

Number of inmates in ten-year period ended 31st December,
1947—

Admitted and released	..	..	..	983
With no convictions after release	..	..	..	531
Convicted but not re-sentenced	..	..	..	39
With one conviction after release	..	..	..	167
With more than one conviction	..	..	..	198
Who became persistent offenders	..	..	..	48

These figures indicate that there is still room for improvement, but they compare more than favourably with the figures of the English Borstals, and are considerably better than those of the United States Federal Bureau of Prisons. A detailed analysis was made to discover whether length of sentence or the proportion of the sentence served had any bearing on future conduct, but no conclusive answer was found. As far as the figures are concerned, there appears to be no correlation between length of sentence and time served with recidivism. Quite obviously other factors such as previous history, home environment, stability of personality, opportunity, and chance all enter into the overall-picture.

Behaviour.—The standard of behaviour has been maintained at a high level throughout the year. The numbers have been smaller, which has made it possible to concentrate more on the individual than in times when the muster has been high. Stress has been placed on the positive side of discipline rather than on coercion and the threat of punishment. An endeavour has been made, both through collective and individual appeal, to induce the lads to respond to discipline and do right rather than wrong on the basis of personal choice and decision, rather than because it was demanded by the rules. An attempt has been made to develop a community spirit and a sense of social responsibility to the group which it is hoped will carry over to the community when the lads are released. There has been discouragement and disappointment, but on the whole we have felt that there has been a marked response by the majority of the lads. The number of escapes was rather higher than usual, and in two instances considerable damage was done to private property by the escapees. There were 2 attempted escapes involving 4 inmates : 2 inmates escaped from an escorting officer on the way to the institution ; and 5 escapes from the farm and institution. In each case the inmates were recaptured within a few days and additional terms were added to their sentences.

Programme.—The programme of work and play in the institution is planned with a view to keeping the lads busily occupied in jobs that are inherently interesting and in sports that are competitive and challenging. With this in mind we have sought to develop new industries and mechanize old ones, and have as well taken steps to extend