

be placed in the probation license under which he will be released. In some cases the Board has reluctantly come to the conclusion that to advise the release of some applicants for probation would, at the present time, be inadvisable. In some cases the prisoners are unable to fight the battle of life, and if they were released they would again commit crime. The Board has also had brought before it some who are mentally defective, and who are, the Board believes, not fit to be at large. They are not so defective as to be relegated to a mental hospital, but they want will-power, and the Board is afraid it is hopeless to expect that those who are—to use a term that has been applied to them in England—"moral idiots" can ever be turned into useful citizens. In several cases the past career of the prisoner, and his conduct in gaol, give no satisfactory evidence that he is fit to be released. There are other cases in which a release might have been granted if any employment could have been found for them. These last-named cases are, however, very few.

The Board in releasing prisoners always attempts to find profitable and proper employment for the prisoner so released. The Board prefers to send prisoners to country districts, and it is glad to state that in many instances settlers, having first been informed of the past career of the prisoners, have accepted them as employees, and in the great majority of these cases there has been up to the present no recurrence of crime. The Board has put many of those released under strict conditions in cases where, judging by their past history, they would fall into temptation if facilities were given to them of obtaining alcohol. The conditions inserted in the license have been that the prisoner shall not visit any publichouse, and shall not taste alcohol. In other cases meeting with old fellow-criminals often leads to the commission of new crimes, and, as far as possible, steps have been taken to try to prevent such meetings. The Board also considers, in recommending the release of prisoners, whether there is any proof that the will-power of the prisoner is such that he can resist temptation. How a prisoner disposes of the small sum that is set apart for habitual criminals—namely, 6d. a day—sometimes affords a guide as to how the prisoner is likely to act when released from prison. Some prisoners carefully and thriftily save their money, and have it placed to their credit; whilst others waste every penny that they are allowed to spend in purchasing such luxuries as are permitted. It cannot be expected that prisoners who have followed a career of crime for many years can all at once become good citizens, nor that their will-power will be so strong as to prevent their falling again into the ways of crime. There is, however, great hope that those who are young when the offences for which they have been punished have been committed will be able to become good citizens. Even, however, some of those who have been many times convicted have shown a desire to live without preying upon the community. It is too early yet to say what the effect may be of the many releases on probation that have been granted. A few who have been released on probation were only a few days out of gaol before they again reverted to a criminal career. If the ages of those undergoing reformatory treatment whom the Board has recommended for release on probation are examined, it will be seen that the Board has considered that probation is more fitting to and should sooner be tried with the young than with those who are past middle life. The Board feels that, under present conditions, there is a better chance of youths reforming if let out on probation, under strict conditions, as to drink, &c., than in being associated in the city gaols with old criminals.

The Board desires to point out that if there is to be any great success in reformatory treatment two things are necessary: (1) The warders in the gaols must be systematically trained; (2) there must be efficient and properly arranged prison buildings.

The Board places the suggestion as to warders first. It must not be overlooked that the Dominion is introducing a new prison system. Formerly detention, and insisting on work, were what was deemed of main importance in the treatment of prisoners. What was done on reformatory lines was slight, and without any defined system. If the proposals recently made are to be fairly tried, there is the utmost necessity of giving the warders an opportunity of receiving a thorough training in the modern methods of reformatory treatment. The teachers intrusted to carry out such training will require to be men who have made criminology and penology a study, and who have a knowledge of the psychology of criminals. The responsibilities of warders under any system of reformatory discipline are great, and it is not fair, without giving them every assistance to equip themselves for their arduous task, to impose these additional responsibilities upon them. The Board is not casting any reflection upon the present warders, but considers it its duty to point out, in their interests, as well as in the interests of the prisoners under their charge, that they cannot be expected to know intuitively the requirements of a scientific reformatory treatment, and they should therefore obtain a thorough training in the work expected of them. In making this suggestion the Board is only advising the administration to follow the example of many countries in Europe that have dealt with the problem of prison reform. Reference may be made to Denmark, France, Hungary, and Italy. Even Japan has begun to train its warders. In Hungary the prison reformers asked that there should be special classes for prison officers in the university. There is an interesting article on the subject in the American magazine called *The Survey*, of date the 21st January, 1911. Professor R. Vambery, of Budapest, is the writer. He quotes the remarks of one whom he characterizes as the most prominent European representative of penological science, Dr. Krohne, as follows: "It is ridiculous to quarrel about prison systems and leave the carrying-out of them to officers who do not understand their theories. It is labour lost to establish the strictest rules, and to make the most elaborate provisions, and then place these in the hands of officials who scarcely understand the letter, much less the spirit, of the act." This view corresponds with the opinion of the late Danish Minister of Justice, who said, "Donnez-moi le meilleur règlement avec un mauvais directeur, vous aurez aucun résultat. Donnez-moi un bon directeur, même avec un règlement médiocre, et je vous réponds que tout ira à merveille." Which may be paraphrased thus: "Give me the best system under an inefficient officer and anything may happen. Give me an efficient officer even under a bad system, and I tell you that the result will be marvellous."