

The borstal system, of course, is an integral part of the prison system, attacking the problem of delinquency in the incipient stages in order to arrest anti-social trends before they become established habits. With young offenders reclamation should be the primary object in view; with older offenders who are able to appreciate the nature of their actions, punishment and deterrence loom more largely in the scheme of treatment.

The following paragraph from a booklet issued by the Home Office authorities for the guidance of Borstal Officers in England is of interest: "The Borstal Officer will further remember that the prison and the borstal service is but one service, facing the problem of crime at different stages, tackling it with different weapons. In prison, too, there is training to be done, character to be studied, situations often of greater difficulty to be met. There has grown up a feeling of interdependence between the two wings of the service in which there is no room for comparison or depreciation. Neither can do without the other, and there must be free passage from the one wing to the other. This is the mark of a good team."

Regarding the question of vocational training, the following extracts from the booklet referred to throw an interesting light on the policy which the Home Office authorities are pursuing: "Borstal institutions do not claim that they teach a lad a trade, but they should be able to claim that they teach him to work. Because this is so difficult a task, and so much hangs upon its accomplishment, party officers use every means at their disposal to keep the lad at his job for an honest eight-hour day. . . . The great majority of the lads are going out to unskilled labour. Many were born to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, and it is idle to spend the money of the State in seeking to change them into incompetent tradesmen. For them, labouring work, arduous and continuous, is the best preparation for the life that ensues. . . . The best way to make a lad healthy is to make him hard; he should not be afraid of blisters and cold winds and the hacking of shins; the fewer clothes he wears for work or exercise the harder will he work, the harder he will become."

INDUSTRIES AND DEVELOPMENT.

Dr. Ettinger, in his recent book "The Problem of Crime," states, *inter alia*: "There could be no doubt that the proper employment of prisoners is the most important problem in connection with imprisonment to-day.

At the present time the curtailed appropriations and the necessity for economy in the cost of departmental administration make it particularly desirable that prisoners shall be placed, as far as practicable, on productive and remunerative work in order to keep down the cost to the taxpayer for their maintenance. Apart, however, from the economic aspect, the provision of suitable work plays an important part in any scheme of reformation. As was laid down in the Standard Minimum Rules at Berne comparatively recently, by the International Prison Commission in collaboration with a special Committee of the League of Nations, "the principal aim of the treatment of prisoners should be to accustom them to order and work, and to strengthen their moral character." "Make men diligent and they will be honest," was the dictum of John Howard, the great prison reformer.

The German Criminal Jurist, Liszt, declared that "the essence of imprisonment was organized compulsory work."

The difficulty from a practical administrative point of view is that whenever prisoners are placed on productive work the Department is faced with protests in respect of competition with free labour. The old forms of task labour involving the use of the crank and treadmill certainly were devoid of this objectionable feature, but there was nothing more demoralizing and dehumanizing than the practice of compelling prisoners to repeat the same useless and soul-destroying task over and over again. Even up till comparatively recent years it was by no means uncommon in our local prisons to see prisoners using wheelbarrows to convey spoil backwards and forwards in profitless and useless task fulfilment.

It is to be borne in mind that most prisoners are workers before their conviction, and as many as can be utilized follow their customary occupation in prison, consequently the fact that they are prisoners does not increase the supply of labour energy in the community, nor should the mere fact that they are behind prison bars debar them from being useful economic units of society. The majority contribute, through the fruits of their labours, towards the maintenance of their dependants. They must, therefore, be regarded as carrying a social responsibility which involves the right to work.

There is the difficulty that prison labour is necessarily confined to avenues that require the minimum of capital outlay in plant and equipment, and in consequence a greater number of persons are employed in simple industries such as quarrying. There is no industry so peculiarly suited for the employment of prison labour, particularly the class of prisoner that requires constant and close supervision.

In most countries it is now accepted as orthodox for prisoners to be usefully employed, and so long as the products of their labour are not sold at "cut rate" prices the marketing of prison-made commodities is not objected to. In some countries a policy of prison manufacture for "State use" is followed. In America and Australia, for example, an extensive range of requirements of Government Departments is manufactured in the prison.

In New Zealand the aim has been to avoid competition with private enterprise as far as practicable. Largely because of this policy brickmaking and sawmilling were abandoned as prison undertakings, and with the exception of a comparatively small quantity of sales of quarry metal the whole of the Department's manufactured products are for departmental supplies. There has been a definite bias towards primary production, and in recent years farming and farm-development work have been the main activities of the Department. The farms at Waikeria, Invercargill, Paparua, and Wi Tako afford productive and instructive work for a large number of inmates. Besides providing a considerable