

owner from the power of self-control. But not only should this amount of cerebral disease be proved as existing at the time of the perpetration of the deed, be it what it may, but as also existing some time previous to its perpetration. It is not probable that direful disease of this kind should begin to break out all of a sudden. It may have been overlooked or disregarded, or its existence might have been recognized and foreseen, but its growth and progress must have betrayed itself occasionally by obvious signs beforehand, possibly unrecognized. Only let it once be proved that no such disease had ever at any time declared itself, and it then follows, as a matter of course, that the culprit is not a madman, but most assuredly a criminal. After the existence of cerebral disease, the next plea is that of ignorance. But this plea is soon dismissed. No one ought to be allowed to be so ignorant as to be excused from the penalties of his crime on that account. If he is, then those with whom he is associated, connected, or concerned, or by whom he is supported and maintained, must be made responsible for his good behaviour. But this extreme ignorance at the present day is an absurdity. It cannot be imagined as possible; it ought not to be allowed, if true; and it should not be accepted as an excuse for crime, if it exists. The question then turns upon criminal insanity, the helpless and hopeless result of organic disease of the brain."

To arrive at any useful classification or separation of the responsible criminal from the irresponsible offender or the "criminal insane" we require the services of highly trained and experienced psychologists and psychiatrists. Scientific men of this class should be available not only to examine and classify a large number of prisoners already serving sentences, but also to make a careful examination of offenders before sentence is passed by the Courts. This applies particularly, but by no means entirely, to sexual offenders, whose cases cause the Judges much perplexity. It is not the patently feeble-minded offender who presents the problem either before the Courts or after sentence, but the border-line case in which the reason for the offence, which is often motiveless, or is repeated many times, requires explanation.

Although the necessity for a psychological examination in many cases is here stressed in order that a reasonable degree of justice may be done, I do not wish to convey the meaning that men whose offences are found to be due to some mental abnormality or mental lack should be set at liberty. The necessity for their temporary or permanent segregation is probably as urgent, or even more so, than that of the ordinary law-breaker; but if their cases were once properly diagnosed it might be possible to give them some more reasonable and helpful treatment than can be provided for under the ordinary prison routine. Little can be done, however, until or unless we are given the means to effect the separation or classification I have referred to by the appointment of men with the necessary scientific training to carry out the work. There is little doubt that there is ample scope for the services of trained psychologists and psychiatrists in connection with the mental hospitals, the prisons, and the Department entrusted with the care of feeble-minded and deficient children.

PAYMENT OF WAGES TO PRISONERS FOR SUPPORT OF DEPENDANTS.

The system established at the beginning of 1921 under which prisoners with necessitous dependants are paid a scale rate of wages for their support has been continued with satisfactory results. Considerable relief has been afforded in many deserving cases, and the hardships from which the wives and families of prisoners suffer have been reduced. As with all beneficial measures of this kind, the payments to dependants are now looked upon as a "right" and not as an act of grace, and it often happens that the Department is rewarded for its benevolence—that is, for the substitution of something where there was previously nothing—by complaints as to the "inadequacy" of the payments. Vigorous protests are also received from relatives of prisoners who wish to live on the prisoner's "pay" although fully able to support themselves. The Department is necessarily careful in its administration of the wage-payment regulations, and will not pay out unless there is positive proof that assistance is really necessary. The total expenditure under this head for the year was £5,372, which, added to the amount expended previously, gives a gross expenditure of £15,831 since the new regulations came into force on the 1st January, 1921.

HEALTH OF PRISONERS.

The general health statistics show that the daily average number of inmates on the sick-list was 22:19. As pointed out in former years, the major part of the sickness among prisoners is due to causes arising prior to their committal to prison. Prisoners who are received in a comparatively healthy condition are very rarely on the sick-list, and invariably such inmates improve in health during their incarceration.

PRISONERS DETENTION ACT, 1915.

There was one male prisoner dealt with under the provisions of the Prisoners Detention Act during the past year. The total number who have been detained under the provisions of the Act since it was first passed is now thirty-one.

DEPARTMENTAL AND STAFF MATTERS.

There have been no retirements during the year. Generally speaking, the controlling officers and the staffs have worked well, and have everywhere shown good results in regard to the quantity and value of the work carried out under their supervision. This is all the more creditable when it is remembered that of all the members of the General Division under the control of the Public Service Commissioner prison officers work the longest hours. During my recent unofficial visit to the Australian States I found that while the pay of the Australian and New Zealand officers was much on the same level, the Australians had the advantage so far as hours were concerned, that is, if we take into account the total number of hours worked for the whole year. In this connection I trust that the representations I have made on the subject will receive recognition, as it is becoming increasingly apparent that if we are to have efficient service in the Department and are to carry out