

way of protecting the community. Doubtless, much more could be said on the subject. This is merely touching on one aspect of the matter.

The Punishment of the Offender

This second object for which the prison exists presents a very much more complicated problem. In the early days of history the prison was usually only used to keep offenders in custody in readiness for their punishment. This, in many cases, was torture, maiming and death; while such means of inducing a better frame of mind in the culprit as the stocks, the pillory, the ducking stool, and the "Scold's Bridle," were resorted to in less heinous cases. The use of the prison as a place of authorised punishment gradually arose from a variety of causes.

As stated in the article above referred to, there is a strong natural feeling in the minds of most people that the person who has caused injury and suffering to another by wanton evil-doing should be made to suffer in some proportionate way. It is natural, without doubt; natural law fulfilling itself thus every day. The obvious danger is, of course, that this urge for the prisoner to suffer is very apt to degenerate into a mere desire for revenge. The fact that the crime committed is the result of something else, which needs to be discovered and dealt with, may very easily be completely ignored, and it may be imagined that all has been done in the matter when the offender has been put where he will have a thoroughly unhappy and uncomfortable and hard time lasting long enough to make him very sorry for himself and very much afraid of repeating the experience. For the difference between justice and revenge the student is recommended to read an essay by G. K. Chesterton entitled "The Twelve Men," contained in a collection called "Tremendous Trifles."

The great difficulty about punishment is that of making any discrimination between those guilty of the same crime because of some difference in motive, or circumstances, or physical conditions. The same crime, however caused, involves the same hardship for the sufferer from it, and it is not easy to differentiate in the treatment of the criminal. In fairness let it be said that much is done to avoid injustice in this regard. Mental illness, previous records, and other circumstances are taken into account when sentence is pronounced, and this is a great advance on the procedure of earlier days. But, it is not yet the rule for every prisoner to be the subject of close study so that the punishment may have more effect than merely to make him suffer in his turn. How pointless such punishment becomes without some understanding of the criminal's individuality. A great deal has been written and spoken on this subject. Its ramifications are endless because human beings are so various. So far as our observa-

tions go for the purposes of our study, it would seem that, whether the punishment suffered in prison has the effect of deterring the prisoner from further crime or not, some more definite attempt to bring him to a better mind is needed. In any case, the numbers of "recidivists" make for a sceptical attitude as to the value of punishment alone.

The Prisoner's Attitude

What is the attitude of the prisoner to life as it is to be when his term is ended? The individuality factor is of course, the deciding one. The same treatment, the same general circumstances, may cause quite different reactions in different people. It would be good if there could be any certainty that his imprisonment would bring about in any man the desire to live so that his experience would not recur. But no such certainty exists. Our concern should be as to whether his treatment in prison has been directed towards this end, or whether the mere punishment was all that influenced those that administered it. This is too complex to be dealt with here; but a quotation from an article by John A. F. Watson, J.P., vice-president of the National Association of Prison Visitors, and chairman of the London Juvenile Courts, may give us something to consider in the meantime. He says: "The history of the English prison is the history of a war between two schools of thought. On the one side were those who regarded all criminals as social outcasts, and who believed that the best way to combat crime was to inflict a retributive punishment so horrible that people would be frightened into good behaviour; on the other were those who believed that the interests of the community were better served by a penal system which, though unpleasant enough to remain a deterrent, made some attempt to reform the offender."

If we can bring ourselves really to think of the criminal as a possible asset rather than a liability to the community, we shall be interested to learn something of the steps taken to produce the change. Our own attitude is important enough to be well examined.

METHODS

Poll Year Suggestions

Dear White Ribboners,

This is election year. Every member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union will, I know, be willing to do her part in winning votes for the abolition of the liquor traffic.

Let us start our campaign now by first organising meetings for prayer. If each union, no matter how small, would meet and pray for **God's help** what a sure foundation that would be to build a strong organisation for the campaign.

Then, begin now to enclose literature in letters, to paste temperance facts on envelopes. The public needs educating. When you give or write medical temperance facts, always give the name of the doctor or scientist responsible for it. It will carry more weight.

A valuable method of gaining more votes would be to increase the names on our L.W.R. Cradle Roll, and to form L.T.L. or Bands of Hope. In this way we would have the opportunity of contacting the parents.

Are we giving as much help to the "Y" branches as we could? Our "Y" branches need building up. We know there will be thousands of first-voters this year. What are we doing to catch their votes? If we are going to succeed let us start now.

Every month your officers and superintendent will try to make some plans of work for the poll, and I would like to suggest that unions be asked to report how many they carried out at the end of the year.

Yours in the Master's service,

AMY KASPER,

Superintendent,

Methods Department.

A further suggestion as to our efforts for this momentous year is sent in anonymously:—

At each meeting of the union let the following questions be asked: "Have you attempted any definite temperance work during the past month? Are you trying to influence a child, or an adolescent, to become a total abstainer? Hands up for an affirmative answer?" And if not, why not?

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INTERESTING

COMPILATION

Officials of the Office of Price Administration in Newark, New Jersey, allotted 5,459,997 pounds of sugar for home canning from April 1 to October 27. After careful study of this figure, the officials declared that if all this sugar had been used for fruit canning, it would have made 21,839,988 quart jars and, laid end to end, these jars would have covered the distance from Newark to London, England. This would have given eight and a half quarts of canned fruit to every man, woman, and child in the 21 North Jersey counties covered by this board.

Adding the sugar allotted to the manufacture of alcoholic beverages in the State, many families in Europe who have not tasted canned fruit for many years, could have been bountifully supplied. — From "The Union Signal," January 5, 1946.