

BOOK REVIEWS—cont.

tional treatment predictors (but, of course, situations can well arise where it will be important to know who is most likely to offend, even if no preventive measures are immediately apparent).

Despite this one lapse into near-mechanical thinking, the Gluecks' claim that they have made an important scientific breakthrough is well justified. Moreover, their book is very readable, generously provided with appendices (in one of which occurs a very useful alphabetical list of operational definitions of predictive factors); the text is liberally illustrated with tables—these, although they do not save the lazy man the trouble of reading the text (which is almost true of the tables in "Unravelling Juvenile Delinquency") are admirable as summaries of the main findings. This work, together with the Mannheim-Wilkins study, with which it obviously invites comparison, could provide the basis for a penal practice which would be empirical rather than speculative.

BERNARD MARCUS.

PENAL PRACTICE IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

A Critical Examination of the White Paper Policy

C. H. Rolph and others

Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency. 1960. pp.45. 3s. 6d.

THIS "CRITICAL EXAMINATION" of the White Paper is an attractively printed and easily handled little publication costing you 3s. 6d. and it might be appropriate in attempting to review it to say something about book reviews generally, as this

booklet is a form of review in itself. Some readers of the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL have claimed there were too many book reviews in the first issue; others said book reviews were the best part. So it might be correct to assume that people in this Service are interested in book reviews and that they are concerned with the quality and quantity of this particular part of the Journal.

Many people believe that it is an easy job to review a book. "What nicer" they ask, "than to sit down with a new book, a free copy at that, read it and then say something about it". They think reviewing falls into two classes, gentle pleasantly written appreciations, or acid smart criticisms. However it is not the policy of the Journal to publish gentle, purring, cosy comments, nor to produce sharp, uncomfortable denunciations; but we hope we will not merely write dull stuff. We aim to tell you about books which you might like to buy or borrow and then read, about others you may never want to buy or borrow (much less read) but about whose existence you would not wish to be ignorant, and even about books you may have treasured and re-read for a variety of reasons. In particular, we want to inform you about books which are relevant to our work.

Ignoring reviewers who seem to make a living by taking in each other's literary washing and concentrating upon what readers seem to want from reviewers, one cannot but agree that the sub-title "critical examination" is a good indication of what most people want. They want to have books examined, and reported upon, by people on whose critical judgments they can rely.

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This 45-page booklet amounts to the ideal review. The White Paper, (originally published as Cmnd. 645 H.M.S.O.) was a Government publication and while it must have been reviewed by many writers it has never received until now such concentration of critical examination. It is really the work of six people. Two of these are contributors to this issue of the Journal. C. H. Rolph talks on "The Growth of New Ideas" in the first article (and all six articles were really accounts of lectures which were given in London between October 1959 and March 1960) and he explains how new ideas in penal treatment will flow from this historic White Paper and concludes "the attitude of many people, decent, intelligent kindly people to this subject is still primitive and fear-ridden. They see it in black and white, crime on the one side and punishment on the other, but never a hint that the two might have common characteristics. Such people must seem, sometimes, totally immovable", but, he adds, it is the task of the reformer and the propagandist, a self-assumed and certainly not too popular task, to move them. Indeed, Mr. Rolph makes several new suggestions or at any rate is very properly critical of some of the old interpretations of criminal and penal facts. He has something to say about poverty as the cause of crime and asks us to re-examine the assumption that larceny is the outcome of poverty. He asks why it is thought that the most startling aspect of the crime increase is that it occurs among the age groups sixteen to twenty-one year olds. Where else he demands, should we expect to find it than among the young and

adventurous. "Wouldn't there be something very odd, not to say startling, about a similar increase, say, among the sixty-six to seventy one year olds?"

This introduction of new ideas and the re-examination of old ones is to be noted in the essay by Mr. Gordon Rose, author of "500 Borstal Boys", who, after noting the changing concept of the Detention Centres and querying the oft repeated and too rarely elaborated phrase "short sharp shock", passes on to borstal asking "Where is the family group borstal, the forestry camp borstal, the therapeutic community borstal? Indeed what about the hostel borstal where everyone works in industry and the self-governing borstal where nobody is forced to work at all?" Many workers in borstals would agree with him that whilst these plans may be impractical there is little use "fiddling with the length of sentence and range of offenders without at the same time introducing far more initiative and flexibility into the system."

"Prisons of the Future" is a fascinating subject for Miss Alice Bacon, Member of Parliament for a Leeds constituency since 1945 and Opposition spokesman on Home Office affairs. Her professional experience as a teacher is obvious here for she has taken a careful stock of the situation, made a thorough search of the White Paper (and many other Acts and historical data) for relevant information and presented her findings in a clear and challenging form. Her main criticism of the White Paper is not that it fails to recognise the present needs, but that it treats such urgent matters with complacency and lack of imagination. "All this will cost a

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great deal of money, but the urgency is accepted," says the White Paper, but Miss Bacon is not satisfied with that. If this urgency is officially admitted then she asks why are no adequate steps apparently being taken. She is quite adamant that the Open Prison experiment should be extended.

Turning from the zeal of the politician-reformer, the reader will next meet Dr. Terence Morris (like Mr. Rolph also appearing in this issue). The politician is concerned with the social implications of the prison problem as they affect the world of freedom, but the sociologist comes right into prisons and looks at all of us, prisoners and staff alike, with a trained eye, and reports on us sometimes with a sharpness we may not like. Yet there is truth in his conclusion that to some extent we are all members of the prison community; truth, too, in the statement that it is the officers who are the "real prisoners on whom the architectural legacy of the nineteenth century bears no less heavily than upon those who have been made unwilling members of the community." Here as from the politician, is recognition that buildings, staff, and research are the main needs of the Prison Service to-day. Miss Bacon says so quite definitely; and Dr. Morris sketches in his demands in subtle and even symbolic fashion. How delightful it is to read of "Governors and Senior Medical Officers as princes and prelates," or of the merchant banker role of the barons. Here is research in a modern readable form. Dr. Morris cites Gresham Sykes' words "The prisoner is the unwilling monk of the twentieth century". Surely it

was an English Prison Commissioner—Sir Alexander Paterson—who first observed, over twenty years before the appearance of Sykes' "The Society of Captives", that "a prison is a monastery of men unwilling to be monks". Those who work in prisons must be pardoned the feeling that some of the discoveries of social scientists, e.g. Dr. Morris's revelation that prison officers "are sometimes cynical" — are little more than familiar facts dressed in new forms of words; nevertheless they are pleasant forms and might do a better public relations job for the Prison Service than the too often repeated phrases about deterrence, retribution and reformation.

Mr. Frank Dawtry, General Secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers for many years, and one of the first welfare officers in the prisons (long before the Maxwell Report was published) stresses the problem of after-care. Here is a reasoned account of the purposes of after-care, the snags and difficulties met by everyone associated with it, and once again putting forward new ideas. These are perhaps more likely to interest Probation Officers than the prison staffs, but in view of the close association between the prison welfare officer and the Probation Service it will not do any harm for prison officials generally to find out what the "outside" social worker thinks about us. It is interesting to see how Mr. Dawtry emphasises the need for voluntary bodies to continue their work in helping discharged prisoners even at the time when the extension of statutory after-care might have been thought likely to diminish the need for voluntary work. This is not a

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"new" idea—it is an old one which needs fairly frequent airing.

The critical examination of the White Paper ends with Dr. Peter Scott's "Psychiatric and Psychological Aspects". Dr. Scott, Consultant Physician at the Maudsley Hospital and visiting psychiatrist at Brixton and the L.C.C. Remand Homes, first praises the White Paper's reference to research and says that we cannot be too grateful for such statements "which only a few years ago would scarcely have been dreamt of in an official statement of policy". He has some new thoughts on classification of offenders, and various anti-social personalities are described in a clear, graphic style. The layman can read these descriptive passages with profit. In an attempt to define the modern meaning of "training" Dr. Scott makes a number of references to the contribution of staff and suggests that it is going to be difficult to deal with the "trainee" and train away feelings of anger and resentment unless he has day to day contact with staff who he feels are friendly and interested and prepared to let him talk. Finally, as Mr. Rolph began by asking for a change in public opinion so Dr. Scott says "would it be too much to ask that the community's attitude to crime and its capacity to change that attitude might also be investigated?"

After reading this booklet many times (and it deserves such treatment), one cannot but describe it as an excellent piece of critical work, deserving a wide sale to prison and borstal staffs.

MARK WINSTON.

FORGOTTEN MEN

Merfyn Turner

The National Council of Social Service, Inc.
1960. pp.91. 5s. 0d.

THE PATTERN OF falling leaves on the brown cover is sadly symbolic. In fact, the prevailing atmosphere of the Common Lodging House (sometimes, euphemistically, 'Hostel') is one of incipient decay, of failure and hopelessness. Failure not merely by individuals, but of society which allows these human equivalents of the Municipal 'Tip' to exist. It is a disturbing picture, and a poignant revelation of a little-known problem—or perhaps one should say, of a part of a problem.

The author is familiar to many for his achievements in hostel work of a very specialised kind, and as a sincere and lively speaker. It was a pleasure, therefore, to discover in him a prose style which loses nothing by comparison with his other talents. "Forgotten Men" is as well-written as it is worth reading. Commissioned by the Gulbenkian Foundation, it is "a research into the mental and physical needs" of the residents of London lodging houses. There are some twenty-five of these, and "Domino Lodge," where most of the work was done, is one of the largest, a place capable of providing 600 beds a night.

Under the heading "Residents" Mr. Turner gives us a collection of individual portraits of Hogarthian shrewdness and diversity, and shares with us the slightly horrible quality of his first impressions. For here in the flesh (and much of it bug-infested) is that good old cliché "the dregs of humanity"—the tramps, alcoholics, petty criminals and general ne'er-do-wells.