

BOOK REVIEWS—cont.

in life by any word or action of this remarkable spiritual guide.

Deliverance to the Captives is a little book of immense value to any thoughtful reader, even if it is only regarded as evidence of what has been happening on one of the many battle-fronts against sin and crime.

To the doubter or the person on the fringe of belief, it will perhaps give a better appreciation of the Christian revelation and of the spiritual interpretation of man and the universe.

For the practising Christian, it will provide countless themes for devout meditation: and the prayers which are included might well be used as a basis for a renewed or enriched life of prayer.

For Chaplains and all who are called to minister to prisoners these sermons might serve as models, both in content and presentation, of what is needed. We are reminded once again that "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation". The Chaplain who substitutes pious exhortation 'without form, and void' or the 'pep talk' flavoured with racy anecdote and moral uplift is neglecting a wonderful opportunity and failing in his stewardship.

Readers in this country will be grateful to the publisher and the translator for making this work available to them. It seems churlish to add that there are one or two unfortunate misprints. As we read, it is difficult to realise that Karl Barth is not addressing us in our mother-tongue. No higher compliment can be paid to any translator.

It has often been remarked that "you cannot draw prisoners to

Christ without, *ipso facto*, drawing them away from crime". If this be true — and there is little room for doubt — the preacher of these sermons can be regarded as a most powerful magnet. He sets forth the glory of God and sets forward the salvation of men — "in this world and the next."

HUGH SMITH.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PENAL REFORM

(Library of Criminology No. 3)

Gordon Rose

Stevens & Sons Ltd. 1961. pp. 328

£2 10s. 0d.

PUBLISHED to coincide with the Rally organised by the National Campaign for the Abolition of Capital Punishment in April, Dr. Rose's book outlines penal development over the last hundred years in all its aspects, from young offenders and the growth of probation to corporal and capital punishment. This is such a wide canvas that the treatment is necessarily diffuse, but the subject matter is interesting to penologists particularly because so little has previously been written about developments in the latter half of this period. The mass of detailed facts presented by Dr. Rose suggest that he has been painstaking in his research and goes some way towards justifying the high price of the book!

The Struggle for Penal Reform is a misleading title. It would have been more appropriate to call the book by its sub-title "The Howard League and its Predecessors." This is really the history of the voluntary penal reform societies, and the struggle is seen through their spectacles. Scant attention is paid

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to reforming zeal from within. Commissioners are seen as people to be manoeuvred and cajoled. Sir Alexander Paterson is mentioned mainly because he supported hanging on the ground that lengthy imprisonment was more inhumane. Sir Lionel Fox merely gets commended for being "very willing to listen to suggestions from outside."

Though it is a rather biased view of penal reform, the history of the pressure groups is a fascinating one (though one of limited appeal). Most important of these groups were the Howard Association founded in 1866 to counter the policy of less eligibility and the repressive punitive measures being taken to deal with the crime wave of the 1860's (an age of parallel social unrest to our own), and the Penal Reform League which was formed in 1907 mainly by suffragettes to campaign against conditions in prison. These combined in 1921 to form the present Howard League.

The struggle of these Societies has by no means been consistent nor even always uphill. There have been periods of complacency and inaction, such as 1900-18. At times they have even eddied back and pulled against the current of penal reform as when the Howard Association went down fighting for the separate system with Du Cane against the Gladstone Committee in 1895. But mainly they have been at any time as forceful as their secretary. The Howard Association was William Tallack, the Penal Reform League was Arthur St. John, the Howard League, in its early years, Margery Fry. And the League's present influential position is primarily due to the wisdom and persuasive powers of Hugh

Klare. Dr. Rose's normally prosaic style becomes almost lyrical in describing Klare's realisation of the need for better staff training and for "a fundamental change in the relationships between the different grades of staff and of the methods of prison administration."

Less carefully analysed is the measure of success in the campaigns for reform due to these Societies. The claim is made that the League has "played a considerable part in bringing these things (the abolition of flogging and many improvements in the penal system) about," and that "it has done much to influence the Prison Commissioners in the direction of creating more constructive relationships between staff and prisoners and between various ranks of staff". These are modest claims. Against them we must place the fact that the League's evidence to the Wynn Parry Committee in 1957 was consigned to the waste-paper basket with the curt remark that the Committee also considered evidence submitted by the Howard League for Penal Reform—a fact not mentioned by Dr. Rose. He admits that the League must keep in touch with prevailing thought and not get too far ahead of public opinion. How far then can we credit it with achieving reform? Clearly the reformer often has to wait for his dreams to materialise. The Anti-Capital Punishment Society founded in 1820 was very premature! While, referring to corporal punishment, Dr. Rose's remark that "Perhaps it (Parliament) will now allow this dead dog to lie down in peace" still seems unduly optimistic. The reformer must be prepared to slide back one step for every two he takes forward. And he can only go forward when the ground is suitably prepared.

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The pressure group, like yeast, has a fermenting effect on the whole. Surreptitiously but persistently it presents its case, not by ranting outside but by personal relationships with those within. Its *modus operandi* is more generally a letter to the paper or lunch with a Commissioner than a public meeting or a national campaign. And its *raison d'être* that, while others are busy with administration, "it sits and thinks."

N. J. TYNDALL.

**PRISON AFTER CARE:
CHARITY OR PUBLIC
RESPONSIBILITY**

Pauline Morris

Fabian Research Series 218.

**The Pakenham-Thompson Committee
report published as "Problems of
the Ex-Prisoner".**

National Council of Social Service 5s. 0d.

1960 MIGHT BE CALLED After-Care Year in the world of prisons. N.A.D.P.A.S. vigorously stepped up their number of Prison Welfare Officers, a radio programme, "Who Cares", criticized the whole system with unusual outspokenness, Christopher Mayhew devoted one of his four television programmes about Crime to it, the two Reports under review were published, and the Home Secretary promised that his Advisory Committee for the Treatment of Offenders would once more look specially into the matter. Will 1960, therefore, prove to have stirred progress in what Lord Pakenham calls "this most neglected corner of the Welfare State"?

Certainly these two Reports leave the reader in no doubt as to the

need for drastic reforms. Pauline Morris's Fabian pamphlet gives an accurate picture of the present "dual system" tug-o'-war, analyses the position of the discharged prisoner in relation to all existing and not-yet existing possibilities of help, and suggests a clear plan of what should be done. She starts with Oscar Wilde on the discharged prisoner: "(Society) abandons him at the very moment when its highest duty towards him begins" and the ethics of public responsibility inspire three main requirements in action:—

- " 1. After-Care must be interpreted as the final phase in a process of social rehabilitation begun inside the prison at the time of conviction
2. Men on leaving prison must be accepted back into the community as human beings, not as criminals, and they must be made to feel that someone cares about their rehabilitation.
3. One single category of worker responsible for the rehabilitation of the offender must be established and the services of the Welfare State should be drawn on where necessary."

The Pakenham-Thompson Committee was set up as a result of Peter Thompson's investigating the circumstances of a man who stole from him, and discovering for himself that a discharged prisoner has employment difficulties. The Committee consisted mainly of people in business, not social work (although Pauline Morris and others in the sociological field served on it), and they intended to survey the employment prospects of men newly released from prison. But, of course, they learned that finding a job is only one of the many problems, and in a time of full employment many men find it harder to keep a job than to get one.

The Pakenham-Thompson Report is remarkable for the practical and