

frustrating but the small wage received at the end of the week is no encouragement to them.

Finally where a girl was on statutory after-care the ultimate responsibility for her rested with her After-Care Officer who had to be kept informed of the girl's movements. Major decisions such as whether the girl was recalled or not were made by her. It was therefore impossible to take any 'calculated risks' which I feel might

have paid dividends with some girls. For example, it had been my previous experience that if a girl absconded, often several times, but knew she could return of her own accord, the need to abscond would gradually die. With these girls, however, often the fear of being recalled prevented them from surfacing and returning to their lodgings. This severely limited the chance of their being helped by the scheme.

Prisoners as "Ordinary" People

Sir,
Thank you for the review of *Twelve Months*, Mrs Brown in your Spring issue.

Your reviewer is concerned about "the exaggerated description of conditions (in prison) that the book will convey to the public and which do not now exist." The recent series of documentary films on ITV convey plainly to the public that such conditions do very much still exist. The discussion between Holloway officers on the problem of young offenders showed that that remains the same, too. Nor did the comments and attitude of the prisoners seem changed.

Certainly it is good to see the modern lines of Styal and Blundeston, and no doubt as the years go by all the old establishments will be replaced by similar designs, or better. Meanwhile, however, the large majority of prisoners must be detained in the old surroundings, much as your reviewer may wish this fact away.

Your reviewer is in agreement with me in saying that "the majority of prisoners are ordinary people." Our difference is that I believe that the way to ensure that they remain ordinary people is to treat them as such, and that the Norwich Scheme, group counsellings and mod. cons. are only fringe attempts to do this. To bring the life of the lawbreaker as close as possible to that of the law-abider will require more realistic, everyday demands and responsibilities: productively organized full-time work, at full wages, with full responsibility for repaying out of effort and earnings the damage and loss caused by offending against others.

Work and payment of dues are common morality and the common lot: why your reviewer considers them "retrograded steps" when applied to prisoners is beyond me.

Whether the book portrays all but one of the characters unsympathetically and caricatures the staff are, of course, subjective opinions which must be decided by readers for themselves.

By the way, the price of the book is 18s. 0d. and not 38s. 0d.

Yours etc., KATHLEEN SMITH.

We regret the error in the price of *Twelve Months*, Mrs. Brown.

Miss Smith's latest book *A Cure for Crime* also published by Duckworth (this time the price is 12s. 6d.) introduces a proposal for "Self-determinate" sentences.

It will be reviewed fully in a later issue. EDITOR.