

Miss Molly Mellanby, C.B.E.

by J.J.

"O LORD GOD, when thou givest to thy servants to endeavour any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning, but the continuing of the same unto the end" These words of prayer at the Thanksgiving Service at St. Martins-In-The-Fields for the life of Molly Mellanby had a special significance for those of us in that crowded congregation who were connected with East Sutton Park Open Borstal.

The Park, as its inhabitants call it and remember it all over the world, was her smallest child among the many institutions under her care, but we always knew that she had a special affection for it. The story began in a Kentish orchard during the Battle of Britain, when she walked through the trees to see a camp where girls were doing fruit picking as war work. Miss Hooker, who was running the camp, had asked if she might have a few girls from a Borstal Institution to complete the numbers, and Miss Mellanby had gone to see it. The success of the venture fired her imagination and from that time she began to plan for an open institution where girls

could be trained in both outdoor and indoor work and trusted to take responsibility. In 1946 her dream became a reality. Miss Hooker as Governor, and a handful of Borstal girls were installed in a Kentish country house, beautiful but dilapidated and war damaged. Later she sponsored and watched over the development of the market garden, the farm, the building up of the herd, the new pig styes, and the gradual transformation of the Riding School into a centre for many activities. As one of the many letters said about her "She felt that the Park was hers—that it had become all she had hoped".

Miss Mellanby's visits to the Park were Red Letter Days for all of us. The Board of Visitors Meeting became a happy occasion. She made us feel that we mattered. She listened to our questions with the very marked concentration which was so characteristic, with her 'glacial blue eyes' as one of her former pupils put it, upon us, and we knew that if our suggestions were good she would try to further them and if not, she would give us a reasoned answer. She

had the highest standards, and the spit and polish which went on before her visit was done with cheerful expectancy. She had a wonderful memory for the members of the staff, their work, and their problems. She called the girls by their names, (no mean feat) and her ready interest in piglets, calves, cooking, potato setting and plays brought a quick response from the shyest girl. We know too, how much the Governor relied on her encouragement in this pioneer work and how her understanding and gaiety lightened the heavy responsibility which every Governor must shoulder.

Today, East Sutton Park, the house, the gardens, the farm, the training, the high percentage of

successes amongst the girls who leave, all this is a fitting tribute to the spirit and imagination which brought a dream to life. Early this month 'old girls' came back to the Park, bringing husbands and babies, for the Birthday celebrations of the House. This week a former East Sutton girl has saved up enough to fly over from Canada because she wants to see again the place where she was happy and learnt so much. These are some of the rewards which would give Miss Mellanby much happiness.

Molly Mellanby, a friend and inspiration we shall remember with affection and gratitude. We honour the trust she has left us in the care of this child of her courage and vision.

"Men and Walls" by Tomas Salvador (Putnam & Co.) is a strong, dramatic account, set in fictional form, of Spanish prison life in the 1800's.

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"The Fraternal Society" by Richard and Hephzibah Hauser (The Bodley Head) contains an account of work done in Wandsworth Prison in 1959.

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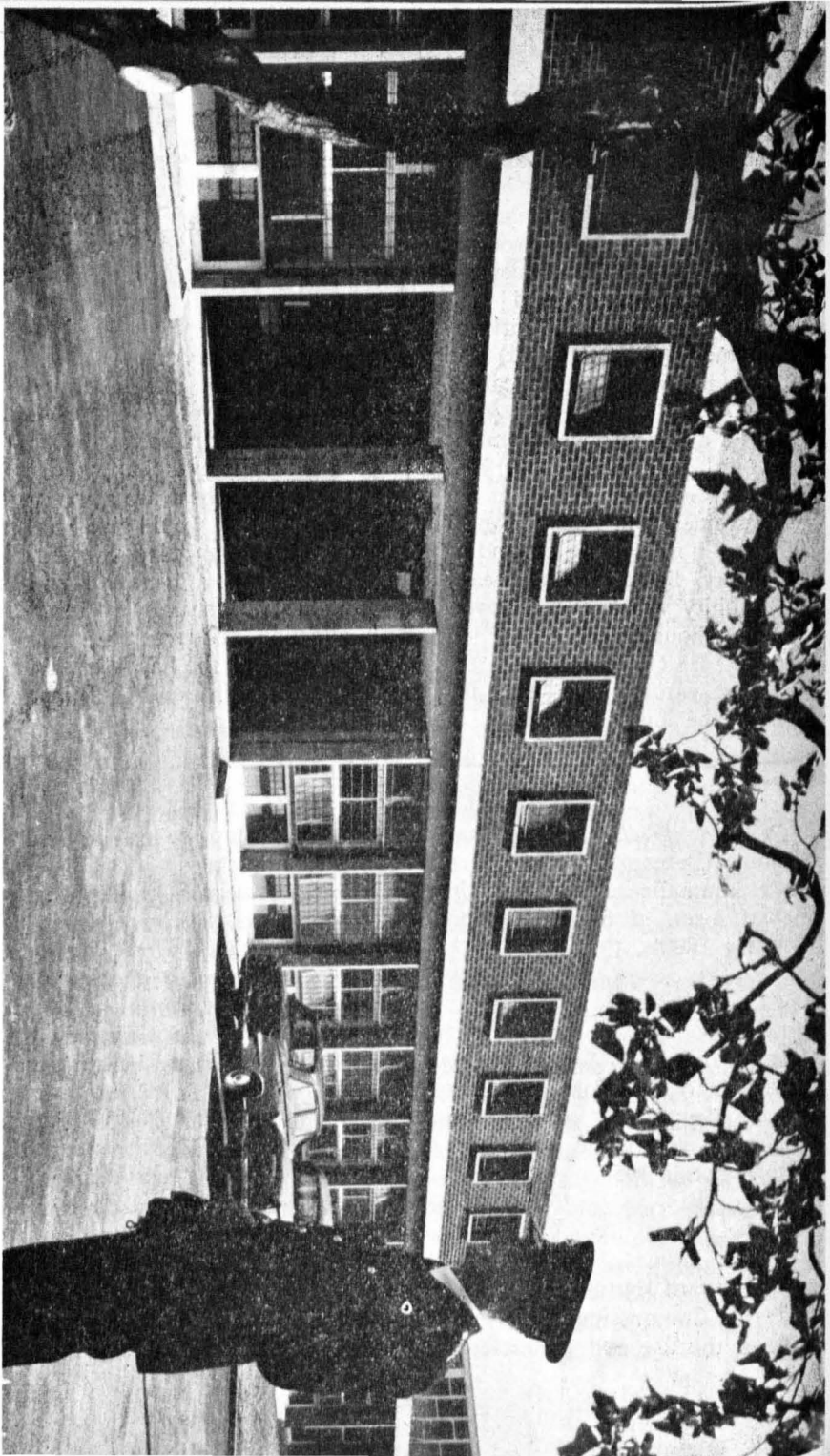
The Howard Journal reproduces the Prison Commissioners' instructions on the use and gradual ex-

tension of group counselling in prisons and borstals.

Over 500 research projects are listed in *"Current Projects in the Prevention, Control and Treatment of Crime and Delinquency"* published in New York by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 44, East 23 Street.

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"The Changing Canadian Prison" was the title of an address given by Mr. A. J. MacLeod, Q.C., Commissioner of Penitentiaries, to the John Howard Society in Ontario.



Ministry of Works photograph.

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