

VOLUME VIII No. 29

OCTOBER 1968

PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

Editorial Office:

H.M. PRISON, BLUNDESTON, LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK

CONTENTS

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 2 | R. E. OWEN | <i>M. S. Gale</i> |
| 4 | THE ROLES OF LANGUAGE IN LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE | <i>W. P. Robinson</i> |
| 17 | PRISON WELFARE—AN OPPORTUNITY | <i>F. E. Edwards</i> |
| 21 | LEICESTER ANCHOR CLUB | <i>Mrs. G. M. F. Bishop</i> |
| 27 | PENAL PRACTICE IN OXFORD CASTLE | <i>W. Forsythe, J. Coton
and A. James</i> |
| 46 | CONTRIBUTORS | |
| 47 | DRUGS AND PENTONVILLE | <i>K. Mothersole</i> |

Views expressed by contributors are their own personal opinions and are not necessarily those of their official departments

Ralph Everard Owen

RALPH EVERARD OWEN, or R.E. as he was known to many of his colleagues, was educated at Westminster, Christchurch and at Kings College, London, with an interlude of active service afloat in the Royal Marine Artillery, in which he was commissioned in 1917 direct from school.

A varied experience in other spheres of social and pastoral work combined with his family background and early training to give him a most fitting preparation for the work he finally undertook when he joined the Service as an unestablished housemaster at Rochester Borstal Institution in 1932.

At Rochester he had the experience of working under governors who made a notable contribution to the evolving borstal system such as Dr. Methven and R. L. Bradley and with such fellow housemasters as Gordon Stansfeld, Almeric Rich and Robin Finch.

Ralph Owen quickly made his mark in this distinguished company and his special abilities as a trainer of staff were early recognised by his transfer to Wakefield, then, as now, the centre of staff training in the Prison Service—first as tutor to the Staff Course, preparing promising prison and borstal officers for accelerated promotion to the governor ranks, and latterly as deputy governor of Wakefield Prison, in which capacity he had additional

responsibility for the officers' training classes. He was governor, briefly, of Gloucester Prison and, for the greater part of the last war, of Sherwood Borstal Institution at Nottingham. To the surprise of no one, except himself, while still a junior governor, he was selected for the post of assistant commissioner in 1945.

His work as assistant commissioner covered the inspection and direction of both adult and young offender establishments but was linked with special responsibility for the development of training of all grades of staff in the Prison Service. This last was his abiding interest and it was in this sphere that his great contribution to the Service during 20 years at head office was undoubtedly made.

The development of the officers' training schools and the creation of the staff college owed much to his vision, patience and quiet determination, to his sure judgment in selecting good men to staff these establishments and to the quality of the support, inspiration and encouragement which he never failed to give them. Ralph Owen's interest and enthusiasm for training never flagged during these 20 years and he never lost his freshness, vision and ability to think and plan for the future.

Throughout this period he took a personal interest in the training and careers both of young officers and young assistant governors and demonstrated a remarkable flair for spotting talent and encouraging men to develop their latent abilities

to the full. Very many members of our Service today owe much to his judgment and perceptiveness.

In the higher counsels of the Service he remained a persuasive and eloquent advocate of the standards and values in which he believed and with which he never compromised. He was not a forceful man and controversy was distasteful to him, while his ability to see both sides of a question prevented him from ever becoming or wishing to become a dominant figure. His quiet determination and persistence, however, allied to first rate qualities of mind ensured that his influence was never to be lightly discounted and he did much to see that training was accorded its proper importance in the general scheme of things.

Such in brief outline is the easily told story of his life and achievement in the Prison Service. How much more difficult to picture worthily the man.

My own memories of R.E., and there will be many who knew him far longer and better than I did, will always be of his gaiety of spirit, his friendliness and approachability, his sympathy and understanding and his delightful sense of humour.

He was the best of company and had the gift of enlivening and adorning any group of which he was a member. Pomposity and pretentiousness were anathema to him in any shape or form. He could be relied upon always to prevent us taking ourselves and our problems too seriously and could always find something to laugh at in the blackest of situations. One always felt glad

to see him whether in his official capacity or as a guest in one's home and he was a most considerate and delightful guest.

With all his grace and charm, distinction of mind and lightness of touch, one quickly became aware that Ralph Owen was fundamentally a serious man and that beneath the surface was an inner and contemplative life from which he derived his real strength and direction. No man could have been more reticent or made less parade of the practice of his religion, but it never occurred to one to doubt that for him his religious faith was the great reality of his life, which informed all his standards and values. From this undoubtedly sprang many of the dominant traits and characteristics of the man, his humility and diffidence about his own considerable powers, his innate respect for human dignity and personality, his recognition of the essential fallibility and weakness of man's nature and of the limitations on his powers to control the course of events—this enabled him always to maintain a sense of proportion and balance and a certain detachment from the controversial issues of his day.

The Prison Service has been fortunate in attracting certain men of faith and vision whose abiding interest was their care for others. Such a man was Ralph Owen, whose comradeship and gaiety of spirit have enriched many of us who had the privilege to know and work with him and whose steadfast example has inspired us.

M.S.G.

The Roles of Language in Learning and Performance

With Particular Reference to Problems of Communication

W. P. ROBINSON, M.A. D.Phil.

Department of Psychology, University of Southampton

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN LEARNING

BORSTAL TRAINING attempts to modify the behaviour of delinquent young men and women. The modifications to be induced apply to the period of borstal training itself, but more importantly to the trainee's behaviour after he has left custodial care. The changes necessary to avoid reconviction can be effected either by changing the person so that he can adjust to his previous environment without recourse to law-breaking or by persuading him to select an environment freer from temptation. Either of these achievements will require that relatively stable modification of behaviour known as learning. What is it that borstal trainees need to learn? For illustrative purposes the complexities of delinquency may be temporarily ignored and its description simplified to a statement that the

means or ends of some behaviour of a delinquent are incompatible with the law. The delinquent either has socially (legally) unacceptable ends or uses unacceptable means in the pursuit of ends, or both. He needs to learn new means or ends.

In the language of psychology "ends" are variously referred to as goals, motives, values and drives. "Means" are referred to as knowledge, skills, abilities and habits. For present purposes a further, slightly inappropriate division of "means" into "knowing that" and "knowing how", may also prove useful. The former is intended to embrace the store of factual knowledge we have about both the physical and social world. Such knowledge can often be expressed verbally, but its possession does not imply a competence to act upon the information available; there is a legitimate sense in which knowing

what has to be done to ride a bicycle successfully does not entail being able to ride the machine. "Knowing how" does comprise the competence to use the knowledge: in fact, successful demonstration may be the only practical test of this knowledge. How does one move a leg forward to start walking? Both non-social and social skills fall into this category.

These distinctions are made as a prelude to the observation that there is no single best way of learning as such. The efficiency of different training procedures varies with what is being learned. Learning "ends" presents different problems from learning "means" and learning how to do something is not the same as the learning of information. The efficiency of learning will also vary with the conditions under which it is to take place and with the present knowledge, abilities and motivation of the learner.

Further, the role and relevance of language as a medium of instruction can and does vary with these features. Language may be essential for optimally efficient learning of some behaviour, but may play only a very minor role for others. For efficient learning about the law, history or the complexities of social administration, language is an essential mode of communication. For learning chemistry, mechanical engineering or psychology, language remains essential, but requires supplementing by experience and experiments, as well as a competence in aspects of the special language of

mathematics. For many simple visual-motor or audio-motor skills, like driving a car or operating a lathe, language may have advisory and corrective uses, but demonstrations with accompanying verbal explanations can lead to almost immediate successful imitation. For more varied and therefore complex sensory-motor activities, like playing soccer or tennis, woodwork or learning how to articulate words and move limbs, verbal explanations and demonstrations need to be relatively subservient to repeated practice with knowledge of results. Social skills are learned by a combination of verbal instruction and practice, but exhibit the additional complications that the use of language is often an essential part of the performance of the skill itself, e.g. making and maintaining friendships. Finally, to learn to blink at the sound of a bell (on a classical conditioning paradigm) language is almost irrelevant: an item of language can serve to direct attention to relevant stimuli or as the conditioning stimulus or response, but its linguistic nature is not significant. Lest it be thought that classical conditioning is trivial in human behaviour, it is worthy of note that some psychologists have argued that its aversive form of pain-escape, and subsequently pain-avoidance, is the behavioural basis of much moral behaviour: the essence of conscience is the fear of punishment consequent upon conditioning. This argument is not as implausible as some people might like to believe.

These categories illustrate four possible relationships of language to learning: sufficient and necessary, necessary in a major way but not sufficient, necessary in a minor role, and almost irrelevant. It would be useful to categorise the physical and social world into discrete sets of problems, classified by the differential relevance which language could optimally bear to their learning. The best that can be done at present is to show cases, like those mentioned, which exemplify the differential role of language and to discuss any particular problem in the light of these.

The differential significance of language for learning situations can be related to the distinctions made between ends and means. The ends or values which guide human conduct are not always stable, immutable features of personality for all individuals, but some people do appear to have zealous consciences or ideals which do not readily change in response to variations of social norms. The force of such values has an emotional anchor apparently within the individual. The original conditions of learning which give rise to such self-regulating behaviour may or may not conform to a simple aversive classical conditioning paradigm, but in some way a strong affective or emotional component has been incorporated into the system. Language may have played a part in the acquisition of such behaviour. Verbal elaboration of the rules may have increased the rate of learning and enabled fast positive transfer of

the learning to new situations, but these rules will have acquired their force through non-verbal experience. Hence, to impart rules supported by such forces to someone who lacks these associations requires more than talking. Language only becomes relevant once such bonds have been established. It may subsequently facilitate generalisation and discrimination and serve to increase the internal consistency of a person's moral system, but these are secondary issues. If this argument is valid, one major problem area of borstal training lies for the most part outside the set of behaviours in which language can have a primary educative function. The installation of new ends requires other means.

A similar restriction applies to much "knowing how". The concepts and principles involved in many non-social complex skills can be verbally made explicit to good effect. Pamphlets, books and oral instruction are important aids to learning expert fishing, welding or tennis. Necessary information can be presented verbally, and the external correction of errors may be achieved most readily by means of speech or written reports, but practice will be of major importance. Further, such skills can be enjoyable or profitably exercised at degrees of complexity which require almost no verbal interaction.

Social skills are difficult to describe and discuss. Learning to play and actually playing the roles of friend, mother or boss will involve language to a differential extent

according to the way people define such roles. We shall see that working-class mothers perceive and enact their maternal role differently from middle-class mothers. One might well find that working-class role relationships generally prescribe less verbal interaction for their development or maintenance than those of the middle class, but language will enter significantly into each. Friends and even husbands and wives are obliged to converse. Hence, a person learning how to play such roles will need to realise how important verbal interaction is for the successful performance of the role, while the performance itself will require the acquisition of considerable language competence, if it is to be successful. Much of the conversational exchange will include the transmission of knowledge, here coming under the heading of "knowing that". This umbrella covers large segments of behaviour. Not only will an adequate language competence be necessary to learn most subjects taught in schools, it will also exert a strong influence upon the type of job a person can obtain and do. It will affect one's adjustment to and use of many features of the everyday environment: transport systems, the National Health Service, tax reliefs, and the maze of social benefits. Little concession is made to relative illiteracy by many governmental and other agencies. This picture of the importance of language may seem unnecessarily pessimistic on the grounds that few people are so deficient that they

suffer unnecessary hardship as a consequence of their language inadequacies. The evidence suggests otherwise. It is a pernicious myth, supported perhaps because we are under considerable pressure to pretend that we are more literate and competent than we are.

The preamble has been long, but this protraction is justified in so far as its implications have still not been realised or applied. The implications are both negative and positive. It is important not to use language where it has no relevance to learning. Not only is this a waste of time, it may also lead to a moral condemnation of the learner when he fails. The role of language in learning to accept new goals or learning how to perform many activities is probably minimal, and the sooner this possibility is evaluated the better. Unfortunately we know very little about these matters: only a handful of the teaching problems in general or vocational education have been subjected to any systematic investigation. Our society continues to use inappropriate inefficient methods of training for a wide range of activities. With the particular problems of borstal training, some such analysis is desirable and should be supported by an honest disinterested appraisal. A recognition of the explicit aims of the training has to be supplemented by an examination of the means to achieve these ends. We must distinguish between the avowed aims of such institutions and what really goes on.

The role of language in learning may become a relatively minor issue in the light of these prior problems, but the stated intentions of the borstal system might be furthered if it became easier to communicate with the trainees and if the trainees could be better equipped to deal with the world outside. For gaining knowledge about the physical and social world in order to adapt to it, a considerable competence in language is essential. Many trainees will probably understand and produce speech and writing which is quite inadequate to their needs.

Once it has been decided which goals of the borstal training are best met using language as a means of instruction and how far the development of a command of language is itself a critical intermediate goal of training, the question resolves itself into a need to specify the nature of the problems likely to be encountered with the trainees. In a teaching situation the characteristics of the learner must be taken into account for successful communication. A large proportion of the borstal population is working class. The modal borstal boy has a lower working-class background and makes below average verbal intelligence test scores. His command of language will appear to be low. The argument to be developed will suggest that "low" is in one sense misleading. Effectively, his ability to understand and use the English language for many purposes may be "low", but this will be, not so

much because he has an inferior grasp of the language, but because he has acquired a particular sub-system or code based upon standard English, a code with its own special functions and structure.

SOCIAL CLASS DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE

Theoretical Framework

It will be argued that we are misled if we think of the English language as a unitary system with a single structure and function. It is possible to isolate many different functions, and show that different structures are associated with these. We can readily see the difficulties of communication which will be encountered by two people who speak different languages, e.g. French and English, but we find it harder to appreciate the hazards when two people apparently share similar words and grammar. That this is a real problem will be illustrated by evidence relating to social class differences, because borstal training frequently involves a middle-class instructor and a working-class learner.

Since it is sometimes considered *a priori* implausible that the working class are likely to speak a "different language" from the middle class (they all speak English), some more obvious differences in language usage may help to set the stage. Each person selects different sub-systems of his own total language repertoire in different circumstances, and these differences can be described in linguistic terms. We are only concerned with parts of

grammar, lexis (vocabulary) and context. At least four parameters have been shown to be relevant:

- (1) mode of communication;
- (2) topic of communication;
- (3) psychological state of the communicator; and
- (4) social situation of communication: both the receiver and other social features of the situation.

Our speech differs from our writing. We use different languages to discuss weather, horse-racing, politics and psychology. The language of suicide notes is distinguishable from that of letters written under calmer circumstances. Men talk differently to their wives, children and employers. For many people there is considerable selection contingent upon circumstances. We might also expect to find individual differences in competence and preference across these categories. Intelligent extroverts probably differ from unintelligent introverts. There are also social psychological differences which are a function of roles such as leader or friend and, moving towards sociology, age, sex and social class differences.

It is these last to which Bernstein (1961) has drawn especial attention, but the other differences are mentioned as prefatory analogies to place his particular contribution in a context of plausible and demonstrated facts. Bernstein has argued that middle-class persons have access to two major language systems or codes, "elaborated" and "restricted", whereas members of the working class, especially the lower

working class, are generally confined to a "restricted" code. To benefit fully from the educational process, an "elaborated" code is necessary and the failure of working-class children to realise their educational potential is in part attributable to their frequent failure to develop an "elaborated" code. The differences in the function and structure of these two types of code reveal why this should be.

The primary function of the restricted code is to maintain or change the nature of an immediate social relationship. It is used to define such role relationships as friend, mother or boss. (More generally it may develop in face-to-face groups and acts as a cohesive force dividing "us" from "them".) The primary function of the "elaborated" code is to communicate information about the physical and social world. Essentially it describes and explains. What is said is more important than how it is said. The latent functions are the same as the manifest functions.

These differences in function are correlated with differences in structure. It is difficult to specify in such limited time even the wide categories used by linguists for their descriptions of language without doing injustice to their activities. Brashly, we make rough distinctions between grammar, lexis and context. In old fashioned terms grammar was form and lexis content, while context was concerned with the relationships between the real world and the language used to refer to it. All are relevant to meaning. Cur-

rently one approach to grammar conceives of it as the rules governing the selection from a small number of possibilities, lexis from an infinite number. In the sentence "The black cat is on the mat", "black", "cat", "mat" or "is" could be replaced by a very large number of words and grammatical form preserved. The choice of these particular nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs is the business of lexis. Many other choices in the example are greatly constrained: the words which could replace "the" and "on", the choice of the grammatical unit for "black" (adjective) and "cat" (noun). The rules governing the selection of adjectives rather than nouns, the order of words, conjunctions and prepositions, the organisation of clauses and intonation patterns are problems of grammar. Current views of grammar are a development from traditional grammar, and lexis is a derivative of vocabulary, but it is important not to see them as too similar. Context will be defined further where it is relevant to results, but of course this is a vital link in the game: playing with a language which has no correspondence with the world is a futile exercise.

Bernstein has argued that the "elaborated" code will be richer than the "restricted" in grammar and lexis. At the grammatical level a greater range of structures will be available, e.g. types and complexity of dependent clauses, tenses, aspects, modality and voices of verbs, complexities of nominal groups. At the lexical level there will be a

wider range of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. One might also expect more meanings to be available for particular structures and units as well. If this greater power through diversity does characterise an "elaborated" code, then the code has possibilities for precision, complexity and flexibility not available with a "restricted" code.

Clearly both comprehension and production of speech will be limited by the language available. Many psychologists would also argue that the thinking processes themselves will be similarly circumscribed. Communication difficulties between "restricted" code learners and "elaborated" code teachers exacerbate the problem.

It might be argued that Bernstein's original dichotomy is too simple and dramatic, but the important problem is how useful it is to look at social class differences in language with this polarisation in mind. It may illuminate likely failures in communication. From the practical point of view, it seems preferable that the middle-class communicator should be frequently checking that he is being understood by a working-class listener. It is better to make the mistake of thinking one is failing to communicate when one is in fact succeeding, than to imagine one is succeeding when one is not. Frequent attention to the possibilities that one's listener has lost track of what one is saying is more likely to lead to improvements in communication than an unquestioned persistence.

The work done on this subject comprises about 10 small scale studies and the present larger scale investigations of the Sociological Research Unit.

SOCIAL CLASS DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE

Review of Previous Empirical Studies

The earlier studies are to be found in the journal *Language and Speech* from 1962 onwards (for a bibliography, see Robinson and Rackstraw, 1967). All made comparisons between middle- and working-class subjects, always matched for verbal and usually for non-verbal intelligence test scores as well. The subjects have ranged in age from 10 to 16 and both boys and girls have been used. The topics and modes of communication have been varied: group discussions on the abolition of capital punishment; a "formal" letter to a school governor justifying the award of a prize, an "informal" letter to a friend who had been away for a fortnight; essays about "home", "my life in 1970", "football" and extensive interviews requiring descriptions and evaluations of education, schools and teachers. These examples also indicate variations in the type of recipient and social situation.

Only small numbers of subjects and short samples of language have been investigated mainly because the linguistic analyses are so time-consuming. As a result, not all studies show the same social class differences, but it is probably safe to make the following generalisations:

- (1) Grammatical differences were generally confined to clause structure and the complexity of verbs. Subordinate clauses, especially complex sub-ordination were rarer in working-class language. Passive verbs and modal verbs (might, could, etc.) were less frequent: the working class were less likely to add such features to the basic verbal stem or to create complex tenses. These differences were most pronounced when subjects were required to explain rather than narrate.
- (2) Lexical differences appeared in all studies. The number of different nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs were generally greater in middle-class language in all situations.
- (3) Four other differences found bear upon Bernstein's thesis, but are of interest for other than grammatical or lexical reasons:
 - (a) working-class language was shown to be more predictable: such children agreed among themselves more than their middle-class peers upon which words were most suitable to fill gaps in sentences.
 - (b) when children were required to switch from concrete narrative to more abstract explanation, middle-class children changed their gram-

- mathematical structures to more complex forms to a greater extent than working-class children. This enhances the plausibility of the idea that the working class are confined to one code and the middle class not; and
- (c) several studies have demonstrated the higher incidence of the socio-centric sequences of "isn't it" and "you know" tagged on to the end of working-class sentences. These accord with Bernstein's emphasis upon the social function of such a code.

SOCIAL CLASS DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE

Work in Progress

The work of the Sociological Research Unit at the Institute of Education, London, is extending this type of study in several ways. Over 500 five-year-old children from one mainly working-class and one predominantly middle-class borough are being studied. Samples of their speech, several intelligence test scores and teachers' ratings have been obtained. Their mothers have been interviewed in order to obtain basic demographic data, assessments of their knowledge of the educational system and their attitudes towards it, attitudes to and reported behaviour concerning play, toys, reading and children's questions, and reported verbal and non-verbal behaviour in discipline situ-

ations. Finally, a special language programme has been introduced for 20 minutes a day into three schools containing working-class children to examine the possibilities of providing them with an elaborated code.

The objectives of the project are many: one is to make a comprehensive examination of the linguistic differences between working- and middle-class children, a second is to examine the links between language and other educationally relevant behaviour, a third is to establish the features of parent-child interaction associated with language differences in the children: what it is that the working- and middle-class families generally do to give rise to differing language codes in their children.

Only a small amount of the data collected has been analysed, but some results can be mentioned.

(1) The speech of the children has been analysed for lexical differences. Although the child's sex and verbal I.Q. were both related to the number of different nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs; social class gave the clearest differences for all four categories.

(2) A subsidiary analysis of certain other features of their speech again showed social class differences. In answer to several questions middle-class children chose more abstract and comprehensive words and structures and gave explanations from a more objective viewpoint. The working-class children expressed things from their own point of view only, giving concrete and particular

details. They made assumptions about the interviewer's familiarity with their worlds which were not justified.

(3) The mothers of the children were asked how they would reply to two "where from" and four "why" questions supposedly posed by their child. Answers were classified in terms of the amount of information offered, its accuracy, how simply it was presented and its type. Social class gave clearer differences than sex or verbal I.Q. Middle-class mothers were more likely to answer the questions, the information given was more accurate, and there was more of it. Their answers did not have as many additional and superfluous phrases like "sort of", "just", "simply", "and all that", etc. The types of answer to "why" questions differed: working-class mothers were more likely to repeat the question as an answer ("because it is") and to use appeals to simple regularity ("it's always like that"), while middle-class mothers used a greater variety of purposive answers ("so as to . . .") and arguments by analogy ("it's like . . .").

In addition to increasing our knowledge about social class differences in speech, this study at the same time showed one set of social psychological reasons for the differential development of children.

(4) Although the data about what mothers report they would do and say in the discipline situations have not been finally analysed, preliminary results again show the importance of social class. The differences

may be expressed most clearly (at the cost of some accuracy) by stating that at one extreme the working class were more likely to say nothing and use physical punishment. At the other extreme the middle class were more likely to *do* nothing, but *say* a number of things. A distinction was made between two types of consequence that misdemeanours might have: consequences involving action (cleaning, repairing) and those involving feelings (sadness, injury, anger). These consequences may apply to the child, the mother or someone else. The middle-class mothers were more likely to spell out the specific consequences for the individuals concerned, so that the child's "misdemeanour" became an opportunity for him to learn about his physical and social world, albeit under awkward circumstances. The unexplained physical punishment, preferred by the working-class mothers, conveys a minimal amount of information.

As with the children's questions, in discipline situations the middle-class mother was providing more information about the world than the working-class mother. Language was the vehicle of communication.

Parenthetically it may be noted that these studies also illustrate different attitudes to authority for the two social classes. In the working class, disputes or questions were resolved by short sharp appeals to authority both for social norms and matters of physical fact. The mothers did not give extensive reasons for their decisions, but

relied on power or appeals to regularity. Curiosity about the social order or the physical world will not be excited and maintained by appeals whose essence marks a wholly conservative acceptance of the world as it is.

These results emphasise the fruitfulness of Bernstein's ideas and help to clarify the nature of the difficulties to be encountered when interaction takes place between members of different classes.

LANGUAGE TRAINING

It was stated earlier that if the subject matter of instruction necessitated the possession of an "elaborated" code by the learner, then it would be obligatory to equip him with such a code before proceeding further. It is obvious that this possibility exists: not only do most middle class acquire such a code, but many working-class children do likewise. An "elaborated" code is essential for successful progress through grammar school, but a large proportion of such children have working-class backgrounds. A higher proportion of working-class children may choose to specialise in the scientific and technological subjects where importance of the competence in English is less pronounced, and many such children may develop a form of bi- or multilingualism for use in appropriate contexts, but they generally master some form of "elaborated" code. The educational system achieves considerable success in this respect, but the evidence shows this to be far from complete. Working-class children perform much less well and

opt out of the educational system earlier than initial predictors of performance, such as verbal intelligence test scores, prognose. Non-verbal intelligence test scores suggest a greater loss. One objective of the Sociological Research Unit is to devise and administer a language training programme in several infant schools containing mainly working-class children to see whether relatively inexpensive materials and techniques can direct the children towards the comprehension and use of an "elaborated" code. Initial results are promising.

Several experiments have shown differences between children participating in the programme and initially comparable children not so involved. Language programme children learned to associate pairs or words more rapidly, they were more accurate in selecting a picture to complete a story made up of a series of pictures and described differences between pairs of similar pictures more accurately. In this last experiment they also used more complex noun phrases to describe the pictures; they used more different adjectives, they were likely to preface nouns with two or more adjectives and were more likely to qualify them (e.g. ships with funnels).

Finally, subsequent tests of verbal intelligence at annual intervals have shown differences between experimental and control children. Early optimism about the extent and nature of these differences has been tempered in the light of further calculations, but it is probable that

the final analysis will show significant differences in the verbal intelligence test scores of the children, with the language programme children higher.

It would seem possible to "change the code" without excessive difficulty. It may or may not be easier with adolescents than younger children, but the incorporation of such programmes into the educational activities of borstals might well prove to be feasible and worthwhile investment.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although details of likely failures in verbal communication between middle- and working-class speakers and listeners cannot at present be specified with precision, the evidence available does enable a statement of several sources of possible misunderstanding between them.

(1) The grammatical structure of the utterances of middle-class speakers is frequently more complex than working-class speakers can readily comprehend. Sentences need to be denuded of sub-ordinations and confined to simple clauses. On the other side, when the working-class speaker uses grammatical words such as "and", "so" or "because" to link clauses, it cannot be assumed that he attributes the same meanings to these as a middle-class speaker.

(2) The working-class lexicon is relatively restricted in two ways: it contains fewer words and these are likely to be mainly mono-syllables and bi-syllables. (Bernstein's working-class subjects used words with an average syllable length of

1.2). As with grammatical words, so with lexical words, the working-class language is likely to have different and fewer meanings attached to each unit.

(3) At the level of context at least two points are worthy of note: working-class descriptions and explanations will use particular examples, so that abstract and general explanations may not register with a working-class listener.

(4) Working-class speech is likely to pre-suppose that the listener shares the speaker's knowledge and attitudes. Hence it will be presumed that more information has been conveyed than in fact has been.

(5) Justifications and explanations in working-class speech will be prone to rely upon simple all-embracing generalisations which assume the inherent validity of what is or has been, e.g. "because it is", "that's the way things are", "it's always been like that".

(6) Working-class language is likely to contain a strong social component; it is testing and checking the social relationship between speaker and listener.

In so far as conversation between middle- and working-class people is intended to have a social function only, the middle-class participant needs to be aware of the characteristics of the working-class code, in order that misunderstanding is minimised and communication maximised. Where the object of the interaction is educative the middle-class teacher must assess the possibilities or easiness with which the instructional problem can be ex-

pressed in "restricted" code, and if it is judged impossible or difficult, it will be necessary to equip the learner with suitable language before proceeding further.

There are motivational difficulties, unmentioned but not forgotten. It is generally assumed that interest is a pre-condition of learning. The starting point must be the knowledge and interests of the learner: it is not helpful to answer questions which a learner has not posed and has no interest in. Once this has been achieved through a study of the individuals concerned, appropriate instruction can show how acceptable enjoyments can be enhanced and desirable goals achieved more readily, if the person has a language facility adequate to the purpose.

In sum the emphasis is upon a continuing worry that the working-class borstal boy may not be under-

stood by the middle-class administrator—and vice versa. This suggestion is not a facile appeal for sympathy and indulgence, but a statement about the difficulties inevitably encountered when people speaking different languages try to communicate with each other. It is hoped that the lines of enquiry being followed by social scientists in the area of social class differences in language may enable a more precise description of these differences. When these are better known and their origins better understood it should become easier to instruct people in the use of codes they have not yet mastered.

Borstals will still have the more intractable problems of persuading trainees to adopt socially acceptable ends and means, but the staffs and trainees should at least be able to air their differences in a mutually understood language.

REFERENCES

- BERNSTEIN, B. "Social Class and Linguistic Development: a Theory of Social Learning." In Halsey, A. H., Floud, J. and Anderson, C. A. (eds.) *Economy, Education and Society*. New York: Free Press, 1961.
- ROBINSON, W. P. and RACKSTRAW, S. J. "Variations in Mothers' Answers to Children's Questions as a Function of Social Class, Intelligence Test Scores and Sex." *Sociology*, 1967, 1, 259-276.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The written report differs somewhat from the lecture given. The occasional attempt at oral humour became even less funny when written; these sallies and some clarificatory examples have been omitted. On the other hand, the original lecture failed to include several points essential to a general coverage of the field and these omissions have been partially rectified.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work done at the Sociological Research Unit (directed by Professor B. Bernstein) is supported by the Department of Education and Science and the Ford Foundation, to whom grateful acknowledgement is made.

Prison Welfare— An Opportunity

F. E. EDWARDS

THE PROBATION SERVICE has been slow to realise the opportunity that engagement in prison welfare presents. Rather than being seen as an opportunity, prison welfare has been seen by some officers as a demand for painful change.

It would seem that there has been a resistance to examining the manner in which we can change and redeploy our resources in a new setting, and too much emphasis on demanding change of others. The prison system is blamed for providing inadequate facilities. The Home Office is blamed for limiting establishment. Attention is focussed on such intangible scapegoats as "the prison mind," whereas given the present situation the most productive area on which the probation service might focus attention is to find how we can best help the prisoner.

One would be grossly insensitive not to recognise that this negative approach is born out of the pain attendant on change. This being so surely the answer is to strive for new levels of competence, search out new appropriate skills,

and be prepared to put aside patterns of practice which may have served us well in the past but have been retained not for their usefulness in the new setting but for the comfort they provide in a painful situation.

The most useful thing to do in approaching new tasks is surely to determine our objectives, evaluate resources as they are rather than as they might be and consider the special expertise that we might develop within the framework of our present resources.

The task of prison welfare might be broken down into three parts, all of which are closely interwoven: (1) The resolution of problems attendant on a person being committed to prison; (2) preparation for after-care and (3) the establishment of primary treatment situations within the prison. The last is the one that may provide the greatest nett gain to the community.

In considering how to tackle these tasks we should be prepared to break away from our own traditions where necessary and adopt other appropriate social work

models. The model provided by a medical social worker e.g. in a well established social service department of a general hospital provides some very useful ideas which might be adapted to prison welfare in a local prison.

What are the skills that merit our special consideration when working in the prisons? Group work would seem to be particularly relevant in a field where the clients are daily subject to the most tremendous group pressures. Group work has, of course, been widely utilised in the probation service in recent years, but as the Home Office Research Unit Survey indicated "There is a need for probation officers engaged in group work to recognise more clearly what they are trying to do and for this purpose to define the aims and methods for each new group in relation to the treatment needs of the members selected." Probation officers working in prisons must heed this conclusion and also learn from the experience and results of the group work introduced and undertaken by the Prison Service itself. The manner in which group work was introduced into the Prison Service and its history from that time merits special attention.

It is submitted that the major objectives of group work undertaken by probation officers in prisons might be the development of the prisoners' insight into their own personal problems and the realisation that these problems might be shared by other prisoners. The groups can be used to provide

a platform for the prisoner to express positive and socially healthy aspirations. A prisoner recently confided that the situations in which a man in prison could say in front of other inmates that he wanted "to go straight" were virtually non-existent. Effective help with personality difficulties using not only the probation officer's skill but also economically utilising the helping elements within the group and learning how to communicate at a feeling level can be found in a group situation. These are objectives the writer has sought in practice but it is most important, if we are to draw on the limited research available in this field, to continuously assess and evaluate our work in this field.

The developing knowledge of working with clients in crisis would appear to be an area that merits special consideration by probation officers working in prisons. The very condition of imprisonment often lends itself to the onset of crisis, and some such crises are predictable and the direct result of the prison system. Rejections by hostel and home leave boards are examples one has in mind. Well established general characteristics of any personal crisis are the readiness of the individual to accept help in crisis and the readiness of people at hand to help. Within the prison system not only is the prisoner open to help but he is available to be helped, while readiness to help at times of crisis is as characteristic of prison officers as anybody else. If each time a

prison officer so involved can be encouraged to realise the value of his helping attitude, and if the probation officer intervening in the crisis can fully mobilise the prison officer's help, the possibilities for changing the prison climate are immense. This particular skill may be a particularly appropriate way of deploying probation resources in local prisons.

In addition to gaining some indirect benefit from situations such as that described above, a group of men exercising a caring function within the prison, if they are alert to every opportunity, should be capable of having the most dramatic effect on the atmosphere of the institution. This will particularly be the case if the probation officers can demonstrate sensitively their appreciation of the prison staff's problems, and show a readiness to learn what the prison staff can teach them. The experience gained over the last 50 years in that most conservative institution, the court, will be both helpful and encouraging.

The understanding of institutional phenomena and its significance for the development of a treatment situation does not appear to be the special interest of any section of the prison staff at this stage. It may very well be a fruitful area at which the probation officer engaged in prison welfare might direct his attention. An example of how the development of such knowledge may help is in the allocation to prisoners of certain tasks within the prison. It may be

that the performance of some tasks may only be reinforcing a role which the prisoner has adopted in the outside community and with which his criminality is directly associated; should this be the case his imprisonment is only developing his criminality. Quite apart from such knowledge being used to avoid situations such as this, this sort of knowledge will be of direct help in the field of climate control to which reference has already been made. It is appreciated, however, that institutional interests in this area are extremely important—too important to leave to a service function such as welfare—and that the in-service training of the discipline staff might be reinforced in this direction.

The concept of a case load as we understand it in the probation field does not seem to be particularly helpful in prisons. Rather than thinking in terms of involvement with a limited number of people for a specific period, it may be more helpful to think in terms of being involved in markedly varying degrees and adopting a much more differential approach to a larger number of people. In prison with a wing system, for example, it may be more helpful to think in terms of a probation officer being attached to a wing of 150 men or more; involved with some only in so far as he is helping to create a helping climate in the wing, involved with others in a more personally helpful and well established relationship.

The relationship of our work to a time scale associated with a

developing treatment plan is a tradition associated with our field practice which might give way in institutions to a less intense relationship punctuated with peaks of involvement. These and other similar ideas are, it is submitted,

worth consideration, but what is essential is the development of a frame of mind that will enable the probation service to break with traditional practice where appropriate and develop new expertise for its new role in institutions.

University of Cambridge—Institute of Criminology

Cropwood Short-term Fellowships

IT IS ANNOUNCED that the Institute of Criminology, thanks to a benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous, is again offering Cropwood short-term Fellowships to persons having responsibility in the field of criminal justice and the treatment of offenders. The object is to enable the Fellows to be attached to the Institute for a period of study concentrating on a definite objective. This might involve: undertaking a specific piece of research (or completing an enquiry already begun elsewhere) and presenting the results in the form of a short monograph or article; preparing special lectures; or intensive reading on a particular topic of direct practical concern.

Fellowships will normally be tenable for a period of six weeks, three months or six months, their exact duration depending on the scale of work which is proposed. The award will be sufficient to cover living expenses in Cambridge. Fellows will have full use of the Institute's extensive library; accommodation for study will be provided. The Senior Staff of the Institute will be available for consultations or guidance.

No formal qualifications for candidates will be laid down, the essential requirement being that of responsibility and experience of work in the field of law enforcement, the administration of justice, or the prevention or treatment of crime and delinquency (prevention will be interpreted widely to include aspects of child-care and youth work). A well conceived plan of study is required as evidence of capacity to take full advantage of the opportunities offered.

Applications should be sent to the Secretary of the Institute at 7 West Road, Cambridge, to reach him not later than 30th November, 1968.

The Leicester Anchor Club

MRS. G. M. F. BISHOP

DURING THE 23 years that I have been a magistrate I have visited most of the prisons in this country and also a number in the United States and some European countries. I have therefore had the pleasure of meeting a great number of prison staff and have come to appreciate the difficult task they undertake. Some, who know me less well, must wonder why I so often seem to turn up at different institutions and particularly why a magistrate should show such an interest in penal affairs and the inmates of so many of H.M. prisons. I therefore welcome this opportunity of writing something of the work I have been doing which may explain things which have undoubtedly puzzled certain officers.

My interest dates from my appointment to the Bench. In those days no definite training was given to magistrates in undertaking their responsibilities and it was left to us to find out what we could in order to administer justice. This has fortunately now been remedied. In the old days we were taken *en bloc* as very new justices, to visit our local gaol where we walked round, being shown certain things and saw a number of prisoners either glowering at us, or completely indifferent. Officers saluted smartly and said "All correct, Sir" when the party arrived in a work shop—we were not introduced; we and they must have been embarrassed by our presence. Finally, in the governor's office we were given a talk about the prison and left—often utterly confused by this brief glance at a completely unknown world. Some magistrates, I regret to say, never visited another penal institution and therefore a great many of us had little knowledge of what really goes on. I was one of those upon whom this new responsibility of sentencing weighed heavily. It is an appalling thought that one may have to deprive someone of liberty and I was particularly anxious to see and learn exactly what happened to a human being in custody. I

therefore wrote to see if I could go to prison for a week in order to find out! You may laugh at this, but I was "very young and very new" as a policeman said to me when he found I was a "beak" after ticking me off soundly for parking my car in the magistrates' parking space in front of the Town Hall one day! Of course my application to go to prison for a week was turned down and proper reasons given, but never-the-less I found that as a magistrate I was entitled to visit penal institutions on application to the governor and could at least learn a bit more.

Then followed some years of visiting all the prisons I was able to fit in with my various duties. I learned that the public little know what goes on inside; that they have no idea of the hazards of working as a prison officer and certainly they still do not know what it is like for a human being to live without freedom even for a short time. During these years my husband and I were involved in running a club for young men and women in the City of Leicester and gradually we found that certain people were applying for membership who had served sentences either of prison or borstal. We took these men into our club in an attempt to see whether we could help them to get back into society again. Through friendship with these handicapped people we learned much of the after-care services that were then available. Most of these did a useful job in providing financial help, clothing supplies and

the like, but the hours that they were open were very limited, often quite useless to men on release, and the whole attitude of the people who ran them was that the prisoner—or ex-prisoner as he then was—had somehow become an inferior being who was to be treated to charity. He was advised what he should do according to the ideas of the particular society he had approached for help, and then if he failed he was an ungrateful wretch and often not worthy of further consideration!

Once you have become a real friend of a man or woman who has been at the receiving end of this kind of charity it is not difficult to imagine what it must feel like, and the resentfulness and frustration suffered by many a human being, who has paid the price the State demanded as punishment for the crime committed, was easily understood. Even now it is all too true to say that punishment does not end with release from prison. The ex-prisoner is always a handicapped individual and it is only of recent years that this is being recognised and both statutory and voluntary after-care bodies are trying to inform employers and members of the public of the true situation. Many employers are helping men to get back into industry and more landladies are offering accommodation so that the position is improving.

Since many prisoners are homeless—or, if they had homes they are no longer welcome, there remains the problem of leisure time. What

does a homeless ex-prisoner do in the evenings and at week-ends? He is lonely, and he usually feels conspicuous. He has lost his old ability to decide things for himself, having lived so long in the sheltered atmosphere of prison where there is practically nothing to decide. The use of money is something with which he is out of touch, and the prices of all commodities have risen during his absence so he is unable to cope for the first few weeks. Naturally he runs out of money before the next pay day, and in many cases he never was any good at managing money before he took to crime! If he has been foolish, and there are many such people in our prisons, he has not asked for help through the welfare department of the prison because he is quite sure he can manage, and anyway he doesn't want to be under anybody's authority once he is free. All that until the prison gate shuts behind him on the morning of his release and he is faced with the appalling traffic, the task of getting employment and accommodation, the effort he must make to sustain himself and the way his release money dwindles during the first few days. To add to all this there are the long delays and queueing in the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Social Security and the interminable answering of questions. By evening of that first day out, warm and comfortable at last in some public house there is a tendency to spend all that is left on immediate comfort. Perhaps an old colleague from a former prison

experience turns up, and here is a new "mug" who may be useful as an accomplice, or it may be that here is an old lag in need of help and a suggestion of where money may be picked up falls on fertile ground. At that time of night there is no one available to provide help—the probation offices are shut, W.V.S. and other services are closed until another day, or after the week-end if the man is released on Friday, and the only way to live seems to be to do one more "job" and get straight, or to celebrate the new freedom. There is another recidivist.

I thought about this a lot, and felt quite sure that I should do what the ex-prisoner so often did in like circumstances.

What could be done?

It was then that the idea came to me that a club in each big area of population which was open only to ex-prisoners, and always available in the evenings and at week-ends would provide, for those who really didn't want to go back to crime, a place where help could be found even in the late evening.

So began the Leicester Anchor Club, the first club for ex-prisoners in the country. At first my husband and I manned it entirely alone, helped by one or two ex-prisoners whom we already counted as our friends, and whose advice about the needs of their kind was invaluable. I have now learned a great deal about the needs of people newly released, but when we began we made many mistakes, naturally, but our ex-prisoner friends did much to cover up and help us to

learn. I had to visit many prisons in order to make the club known, and here being a magistrate helped me because strange and unknown members of the public find it difficult to get "inside" and meet people. Governors, prison officers, chaplains and medical staff all helped in providing much information and gradually the existence of the club became known. Ex-prisoners themselves spread the news on that wonderful grape vine we know so well in prisons, and as our friendship with many ex-inmates grew, so our knowledge of what was needed also increased. We still have a lot to learn even after nearly seven years, but much useful information has already been acquired. Over the years the Anchor Club has developed enormously. Some of our work I have described in my book, *They all come out*, published by Allen & Unwin. The Anchor Club now occupies old premises in the centre of the city which were once a builder's yard, offices and outbuildings. The front part of the premises is a cafe, open to the public by day in order to pay some of the overhead expenses, and useful at night to provide snack meals. There is a club lounge with TV and modestly furnished with a few comfortable chairs where a tired man can sit down in a warm room and rest his weary feet. Across the yard is a fine billiard room much used by club members and provided with a very good second-hand table bought with money given from the local police charity fund! (Just in case

anyone thinks that the police object to such a club!) Upstairs is a small office for interviews, and behind it a clothing store where an extensive collection of clothing in different sizes is kept to help fit out a man who has nothing but the clothes he is wearing when he comes to us; underwear and shoes being particularly useful, and old clothing for labouring jobs. A flat roof has been converted into a very nice roof garden and beyond it is a large room for table-tennis, darts and even a stage built by members where we can have concerts or parties with entertainment provided by members and friends. A call box telephone gives opportunities for members who have friends and relatives to keep in touch, and the cafe is a place where many like to sit and chat over a cup of tea.

I am sure you must think immediately that the last thing either the public or the ex-prisoner wants is just to sit around with a whole lot of ex-prisoners when he has just got out. This is very true, and so over the years we have collected a large voluntary staff, more than 50 of them who come on a rota system. Each night there is a team leader who comes every week on his day and he collects his team, mainly married couples who support him. These men and women are invaluable. They come mainly from churches of different denominations, Catholic, Anglican, Free Church and they have recently been joined by a team from Toc H. All these helpers are hand picked and have been trained on the job.

They know nothing of the old statutory forms of after-care that were so authoritative and often caused resentment by the "holier than thou" attitude which was so prevalent many years ago; they come as friends and the atmosphere is that of a large family. No one may be a member unless he or she has done time, because this makes it possible for an old lag to relax, knowing that everybody is aware that he has been in prison so he doesn't have to pretend. However, having found out this one fact, *no other questions are asked*. In this respect the Anchor Club is different from any other form of after-care. We start from the time a man comes to us, we do not want to know what he has done—probably if we asked we should not be told the truth, so why ask? The man comes of his own choice—he has been in prison—right, from that moment he belongs to the Anchor family and will be made at home. He may feel free to come and go as he likes, may use the facilities of the club without charge, may bring a friend with him if he so wishes, and often there are wives, girl friends, even children in the club.

Prison has to be full of rules, so in the Anchor Club we have as few as possible. Such rules as we do have are necessary in any family where the good of all must be considered and no one may spoil it for other people. Therefore, drunks may not be there, and even members who sometimes fail in this respect may not use the club unless sober.

We naturally do not sell alcohol nor may it be consumed on the premises, and any form of gambling is prohibited since these two problems are very real ones to certain people amongst our large membership. Friendship, courtesy and a cheerful welcome to all our members is part of the Anchor family tradition and difficulties that occasionally arise between members have to be overcome as between members of a family. Very few of these have ever arisen. Every member of the club is trusted because it is his home, and this has only once been abused. If a member fails he is visited in prison as soon as it is known where he is, and we start again from there. My prison officer friends will now understand why I have appeared to visit men in so many different penal institutions over the years. Such failed members are helped to start again and we do not give up. (One man has returned to us eight times and restarted). Many men are successes and some of our friends in the club have been in the clear for many years now. These men occasionally come back to bring wives and families and keep in touch; they make the work we are doing really worthwhile.

Funds are not easy to raise, but now we are supported annually by the city and county contributions and certain charitable funds. We have to find about £300 p.a. in addition to these regular contributions. In all, the club costs about the same to run as the cost of keeping one man in prison for a year.

Twelve months ago the Nuffield Foundation came to our rescue and have provided a sum of money to cover the salary of a trained club leader for two full years and last October the club was fortunate to get Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Brooks (he was chief welfare officer of Parkhurst Prison previously) a probation officer on secondment. Mr. and Mrs. Brooks live next door to the club in a house we rent from the corporation and which was decorated throughout by prisoners working out from H.M. Prison, Ashwell. Club premises are regularly cleaned down and repaired by working-out parties from H.M. Prison, Leicester. Our own members do a lot to keep the place nice.

We need more Anchor Clubs. Every city should have one, and the leader should be a probation officer or trained social worker, paid by national funds, because we have proved that to keep many people from returning to prison is a great saving of public money, to say nothing of the valuable protection this is to the victims of crime. There is now one small Anchor Club in Edinburgh and many visitors have been to see what we are doing in Leicester and we hope other clubs may be on the way. Help is given in all types of problems, marriage, family difficulties and, of course, in getting accom-

modation and work. On our committee are representatives of the City Council, Ministries of Social Security and Labour, probation officers of the city and county and others. Men who return to prison, if homeless are written to regularly and I have sometimes had as many as 15 on my weekly mailing list. This work is gradually being taken over by our club leader in respect of all new members, though old friends who look upon my husband and myself as "Mum and Dad" go on with us if they so wish. Members of the staff have been an invaluable help and some men have been "adopted" by certain of them with very good results. Visitors to the club are welcome by appointment, but any official visitors come only with the full knowledge and agreement of the members for it is their home. Even so, certain governors and prison officers have been our invited guests for an evening! So far no policeman has been invited, but one never knows!

This, then, is our Anchor Club, and I hope when I see some of you from time to time during visits to your prisons that you will feel that we are doing a worth-while job and that we try to follow on the after-care which should always start by prison officers themselves before ever a man leaves prison.

Some Aspects of Penal Practice in Oxford Castle in the 19th Century

W. FORSYTHE

J. COTON

A. JAMES

NINETEENTH CENTURY REFORM

THE 18TH CENTURY prison system was exclusively the concern of the local authorities. The Central Government laid down general lines of practice which were implemented entirely by the town or county powers. Often these Government directives were ignored if it was felt that they would be too difficult to carry out—thus the Penitentiary Act of 1779, which laid emphasis on the function of visiting committees as a basic axiom of prison administration, was not put into practice in Oxford until the early 1820's. The care of the prison was the concern of the local justices in session at the Assize and Quarter Session Courts. The governor was responsible to them and every facet of prison life depended ultimately upon the sanction of the Justice of the Peace. In essence the prison system was local.

The 19th century saw the end of the local system and its replacement

by a uniform pattern of prison government under the control of a central commission responsible for the administration of all prisons. Until the 1877 Act was finally passed, the local authorities strongly resisted this encroachment on their territory. The report of the last visiting committee before the passing of the Act indicates that feelings in Oxford were running extremely high since the city had recently expended large sums of money on prison repairs. The members of the committee felt that the rights and duties of prison administration lay with the Oxford authorities.

It was, however, a century of reform in which the structure of administration in every department underwent fundamental change. The work of Howard in Bedford, the utilitarian thinkers, the experiments in Pennsylvania, and the growth of the humanitarians all contributed to a new emphasis on prison reform. Uniformity, inspection, labour, non-

association, discipline, were the cardinal principles of this movement for reform. The 1835 Act demanded uniformity in prison rules and increased the powers of the Government by emphasising that one of the Secretaries of State must approve the rule book of every gaol or house of correction in the country. The State also announced that prison inspectors were to be appointed who would be solely responsible to the State Secretariat. Where possible, solitary cellular confinement in out of work hours was to be provided. The statute also attacked the system whereby turnkeys were able to exploit the labour of prisoners; it laid down the procedure for the punishment of refractory prisoners and, importantly, demanded that the visiting committees do their job as laid down in the Acts of 1779 and 1823. Thus the 1835 law emphasised the guiding power of the State in prison matters. It was in many ways remarkable in the fact that it almost exactly implemented the draft prison regulations which John Howard proposed in 1789. The Lords' Select Committee which was responsible for drawing up the act were obviously profoundly in sympathy with Howard's ideas: silent meditation, solitary cellular confinement, labour, religious instruction, were consistent features of all legislation of the period. The 1839 Act introduced classification of prisoners on a more complex basis than hitherto—the separated classes were debtors, unconvicted persons committed for trial, convicted criminals with hard labour, convicted

criminals without hard labour, and finally "miscellaneous". The 1842 Pentonville Act carried the reform movement further for at Pentonville every effort was made to construct the perfect prison—at least from the point of view of the reformers.

It can thus be seen from these three Acts that the government policy was a policy of centralisation, guidance, and change. The rules and control of the prison still lay with the J.P.s in session, but their powers were slowly being usurped by the State. In this process the 1865 Act was of great importance. It laid down that each prison must have single cells "equal in number to the average of the greatest numbers of prisoners who have been confined at any time during the previous five years"; it reiterated the ideas of labour and healthy conditions. The important part of the Bill was the creation of a grant system which would be used to meet the costs of the prison system and which would be withheld from any local authority which refused to implement the new reforms. This was a milestone on the road to State control. The final result was, of course, the 1877 Act which placed the prisons under the control of a central commission. The local visiting committees still played a part in their prisons, but their power was wholly limited to minor questions of administration.

The final achievement of the 19th century was the Prisons Act of 1898 which embodied most of the Gladstone recommendations and advanced in practice the ideals of

classification, productive labour and efficient administration. It is worth noting the Gladstone comment on the years 1877-98: "The great, and as we consider proved, danger of this highly centralised system has been, and is, that while much attention has been given to organisation, finance, order, health of the prisoners and prison statistics, the prisoners have been treated too much as a hopeless or worthless element of the community and the moral as well as legal responsibility of the prison authorities has been held to cease when they pass outside the prison gates".

The 19th century was the first century in which imprisonment was considered as an integral part of the penal system. The 1821 establishment of the Millbank indicated new conceptions of the demands of serious crime, for transportation was rapidly becoming impossible. The distinction between local and central prisons was beginning to be made and, although bridewells and houses of correction now formed part of the prison buildings, their connections with the Poor Law were being severed. The 1853 and 1857 Penal Servitude Acts saw a new era of ideas with regard to the penal aims and methods; but nevertheless it must not be forgotten that to the Victorians the aims of prison were reform and deterrence. Both aims required suffering—the reform of the convict by "hard fare, hard labour and a hard bed" was accompanied by the belief that by such methods other potential criminals would be deterred and the man

himself brought to redemption by "the medium of a well-tryed adversity".

In a larger context, the prison reforms indicated the trends of Victorian England—fear of State control, inspection, commissions, centralisation, efficiency, accompanied by bad social engineering, vigorous opposition, strong anti-State individualism and resistance to new methods of administration, are in many ways characteristic of such diverse phenomena as parliamentary reform and municipal government, colonial government and communications, poor law and public health, military forces and education. The penal reforms are characteristic of Victorian administrative changes as a whole and Oxford Castle provides very interesting insight into the revolution which was reshaping the British system of administration into an entity which was both advanced and regressive.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF OXFORD CASTLE

Between 1800 and 1823 the local dignitaries of Oxford took little real interest in the affairs of the prison. There were in fact two gaols—the castle which served criminals and debtors alike, both male and female, and a small gaol which only held about 10 minor offenders and was situated in Gloucester Green; this was closed by the Prison Commission in the latter part of the 19th century. We are concerned with the castle.

The first event of importance for the prison was the Act of 1823

which resurrected the visiting committee which was organised more formally by the 1835 Act. Although the records show that the first visiting committee inspected the prison in 1824, it was not until 1835 that these visits became regular. However, work was done—the recommendations for 1826 include the suggestion that the day rooms where those prisoners who were not working spent most of their time should be adequately heated so as to prevent crowding round the fire with the resulting possibility of “evil communications”.

The visiting committee was a body of Oxfordshire magistrates which were chosen by the justices at Quarter Sessions. Its task was to inspect the prison and submit all recommendations to the next sessions. Every facet of prison life came under the eye of the committee—maladministration, reconstruction, prison discipline, staff problems, work for the men, were among the most common matters dealt with by the visiting magistrates. Thus in 1828 it was proposed that two treadmills should be erected at a cost of £350 since there were at least 30 prisoners in the gaol who were unemployed. This was put into effect during the next year. At the Epiphany Sessions of 1838 the committee recommended that the system whereby the watchman received the perquisite of selling the cinders from the prison fire should be abolished and instead of this he was to receive a shilling a week. In 1838 the magistrates “resolved that it be made a rule

of the prison that all convicted prisoners who shall have been previously in prison after conviction shall be placed in solitary cells at night”. The 1837 Easter Sessions was extremely concerned about the escape of John Graves which was largely a result of Governor Grant’s negligence. At the suggestion of the committee the justices “resolved that if it be admissible for the governor to employ any prisoner at all for his domestic purposes it was most improper to have selected Graves who had not taken his trial and was under the serious charge of sheep stealing. And resolved that James Grant, the governor, be severely reprimanded for his negligence”. Later that year the question of beer for the unconvicted prisoners was dealt with: “should it be in contemplation to permit the unconvicted on county allowance to have any beer? They make a good noise now and would be likely to make much more if allowed beer”. Often the committee stated the reason for failure to comply with one or other of the gaol acts—thus in 1840 the magistrates claimed that they were unable to comply with the provision of the statute of last year with regard to the employment of a matron and female turnkey because there was no accommodation for these.

The visiting committee thus investigated every part of life at Oxford Castle and reported their findings to the justices. Almost always their reports were prefaced with “the state and condition of the gaol are good” and in general it

seems that the local magistrates saw little need for change—they were unwillingly jostled along by the Government. In 1840 the justices drew up a long directive for the guidance of the visiting committees of Oxford. The visits were to be made at least 12 times a year and they were to examine the rules, discipline, buildings, labour, diet, finances, etc., “and in matters of pressing necessity and within the powers of their commission as justices shall take cognisance thereof and shall proceed to regulate the same”. Problems of health were perennial in the gaol—1841 saw repeated recommendations that a better heating system be installed, and only the year before had a serious epidemic broken out. The activities of the committee after 1840 became more and more extensive. On their recommendation the governor’s salary was raised to £350 in 1841, and in 1842 they had gas installed at a cost of £200. In 1843 six improvements were suggested by the prison inspectors with regard to discipline, rules and buildings. The magistrates were somewhat disgruntled by this invasion of their domain and commented: “There is no material alteration in these suggestions from those rules already in operation in the prison except in the dietary which is materially increased. The visiting magistrates almost fear that the comforts of the prison will be so increased that these rules will rather tend to the increase of the numbers of prisoners instead of the diminution of them”.

It can be seen in the records that the visits were regularly and efficiently conducted by men who sometimes showed surprising concern for the well-being of the inmates of the castle. Nevertheless, there is a definite feeling of resentment against the Government which is expressed in the attitude that the new ideas at the centre and among the inspectors for the Secretary should not be thrust down the throats of the local officials. To them the prison system in Oxford was purely a local concern which was not the affair of Government officers or Ministers.

The local bench was not the only body which sent inspectors to the prison. In 1835 the House of Lords Select Committee recommended the appointment of inspectors to report to one of the Secretaries of State. It is not clear how often these visits took place in Oxford, although it is known that a visit took place in 1839 and a report was made with regard to the financial position of the gaol. In 1841 another visit took place, for the visiting magistrates gloomily report: “he seemed to think the plan of our gaol is so utterly defective that nothing but pulling it down and remodelling it would satisfy his views”. By 1859 it seems that the inspectors were playing a more decisive role in the prison for several important matters seem to have been the direct concern of them rather than of the visiting magistrates. Thus in July 1860: “The governor reports a case of gross misconduct on the part of

the assistant matron who has tendered her resignation to me". In November 1861: "James Teague, who was charged by the governor for destroying his Bible, prayer book and other articles has been brought this day before me and pleaded guilty to the charge—ordered that he be kept in close confinement for 21 days".

The 1865 Act added heavy financial responsibilities to the work of the inspectors for they had to make sure that the Government grant was being well spent, and it appears that in Oxford at least they had largely taken over most of the functions of the visiting committee by 1875. However, the Oxford magistrates drew up a report for the last quarter of 1877 in which they emphasise that the administration of the castle was as efficient as could be desired and "that nothing could exceed the regularity, assiduity, accuracy and discipline in the prison". They also declared that they intended to take full advantage of the Act in its declaration that the local committees should continue to deal with complaints of prisoners and they ended their report by criticising the impertinence of the inspectors who had made enquiries into the work records of the prison only two weeks before.

The important visits to the castle had thus become those of the Home Office inspectors, although it must be pointed out that the committees of the locality continued to play an important part in the prison with regard to internal administra-

tion and prisoners' complaints. The inspectors, however, were the officials whose influence at the Home Office was greatest if a change of policy were considered with regard to Oxford. The recommendations of the local magistrates would be taken into consideration, but inspectors would be sent to check the situation and their reports would be decisive in any further steps to be taken. Centralisation brought bureaucracy and impersonal control. The quaint ponderous personal touch of the town committee became the terse, distant control of a huge administrative machine. "I visited all prisoners and there were no complaints. The officers applied for a limitation of hours of duty. These have been increased by the dismissal of an officer—the application not entertained. Signed journals and took cash balance" (December 1891).

Staff complaints were continual for then, as now, Oxford was very overcrowded, and in March 1895 the officers complained of the very long hard hours of work which were the result of two warders on the sick list. The inspectors sent a minute to the commission on this point. In May 1895 a prisoner complained about the medical treatment and also about his punishment for failure to perform the "crank-task" adequately: "I enquired into both and find that the M.O. certifies him as fit for the work, that he was previously reported to the chief warder for idleness. But the matter was not entered in the punishment book. I have pointed

out to the chief warden that this was irregular and that every report and punishment must in future be registered". In October 1890 a staff row blew up between the matron and the assistant matron: "It is a pity that these officers cannot live in harmony. If there is any more of this, I shall urge the commissioners to remove both officers. I think the assistant matron is inclined to show a want of subordination to the acting matron, but the latter will, I trust, show every consideration to the assistant matron". The inspectors were inclined to be critical; in January 1896 they complained that the stores were not clean or tidy, tables and beds "would be better for a sound scrubbing", the fire buckets were not regularly checked, the prisoners' clothes were clean enough, and after an inspection of the library "all fly-leaves must be removed from books before issue".

The inspectors were critical, efficient, distant and regular. In 1894 there were 13 visits, in 1895 12, in 1897, 11. Their job was to act as a telegraph system between the commission and the gaol—their report was the document on which decisions were based. They were the plenipotentiary envoys to the provinces of the Prison Commission.

Prison life revolved around the governor. He was appointed by the Oxford magistrates and was responsible to them prior to the Act of 1877. He oversaw the staff and ensured that they carried out their duties correctly. He was responsible for the maintenance of good order, and was expected to put all direc-

tives from the bench into operation. In 1858 he is known to have possessed a large house situated in the northern part of the gaol and he had to live here so as to be within easy reach if there was trouble. A good picture of the duties of the governor can be gained from the journal of Governor Dilley which covers the period 1823–27. "February 16, 1824: By order of the justices I made a return of the number of persons committed under the vagrant laws during the last four years which is to be laid before the House of Commons." "April 29: Matron and female turnkey appointed by me as directed at Easter Sessions". In May 1824 Dilley ordered John Ellson, a persistent troublemaker, to be confined to his cell for "getting on the water closet in his courtyard and holding a very improper conversation with the female prisoners". Ellson was in more serious trouble in August when he assaulted a turnkey and blacked his eye—for this offence the visiting magistrates had to be consulted and they ordered that he be placed in solitary confinement on bread and water for seven days. Dilley was very interested in classification and, when new buildings were completed in 1824, he was able to carry his system beyond that laid down by the prison Acts. He introduced seven divisions between six yards—accused committed for trial at Quarter Sessions; accused committed for trial at Assizes; convicted felons; juveniles committed for trial; convicted misdemeanants;

debtors; and females. He was also strict with his staff: "I have discharged Thomas Hudson, the watchman, for having repeatedly held conversations with the female prisoners and also for having ordered John Goodgame to steal carrots from my garden—he being a prisoner convicted of felony". A serious escape bid was made in April by William Kevin and others, it was foiled but Kevin did escape in May. He was recaptured and Dilley reports: "Kevin was double ironed when he escaped and has been continued in irons without which there would be but little chance of holding him". In 1825 and 1826 there seems to have been overcrowding and lack of discipline, for the governor consistently punished acts of violence or theft: "January 2, 1826: I confined William Beechey to a solitary cell for two days for repeated acts of disobedience. He is an old offender of very disorderly habits". In December of that year there were 197 prisoners and Dilley wrote: "The number of prisoners continues to rise. The gaol is in a very crowded state. Fumigation and smoking of tobacco is used in the different wards to prevent infectious disease".

The interesting point to be made about Dilley's work is his comparative freedom from interference. The visiting committee was a desultory affair and there was little limitation on the power of the governor. However, the next 10 years were to see this power curtailed by the

insistence of the reformers and the scrutiny of the bench.

In 1835 the House of Lords Select Committee called many hundreds of witnesses before it to give information about the state of the gaols of England. One of these was an ex-prisoner of Oxford who deposed that under Governor James Grant there was complete lack of order, corruption and drunkenness: "There was cursing and swearing and singing going on from morning to night and almost all the night too." Inspectors were sent to investigate these charges and Grant was called with two turnkeys and a watchman to refute them. This he did to the satisfaction of the Lords, but the local magistrates were profoundly disturbed by the whole affair and little sympathy was accorded to Grant when in 1837 John Graves escaped owing to his negligence. Grant resigned on grounds of ill health and, indeed, he died a few years later in poverty with his widow left in the care of the Banbury workhouse. A grant of £25 was made to her "in compensation for garden seeds, vegetables, etc., provided for the use of the prison during the eight years he was in office". The interesting point about the Grant affair was the fact that the trouble started in London, not in Oxford. The magistrates had been quite happy with Grant until the House of Lords intervention, and although the charges were refuted the shock of the entire affair must have led the magistrates to the conclusion that times were changing and that

Oxford must make a determined effort to give the Government no grounds for complaint or intervention. Grant had, in a sense, let his side down and his resignation must have been the result not only of ill health but also of pressure from the local bench. The new governor was chosen at the Easter Sessions of 1837; he was a very different man from Grant, and was well able to avoid falling into the pits prepared by the State.

Thomas Lowton Robins was in many ways a typical figure—efficient, unimaginative, and wary, he was just the man for the job. He was extremely interested in prison labour and his governorship was marked by steady reconstruction and change. The magistrates were determined to keep tight control on him and, in 1840, the duties of the governor were written down. "The governor shall be in authority over the prison and the house of correction". He had to reside in the prison except when his duties called him away, and in such a case he had to appoint a deputy. He could have no other occupation except that of governor and he had to visit each cell daily. He must keep regular accounts of all admissions, visits, sentences, expenditure, etc. It was his duty to report all misconduct on the part of his subordinates to the visiting magistrates, and he had to attend all Assize and Quarter Session Courts in order to answer any questions that might be put. "The governor shall constantly preserve good order and decency among the prisoners. To

that end he shall suppress all disorderly conduct, all profane swearing and cursing and all abusive and improper language. He shall utterly enforce the statute for the prohibition of strong liquors within the prison and he shall enforce as far as is practicable the attendance of all prisoners at divine service. He shall discharge his said duties with all the humanity and mildness towards the prisoners consistent with their safe custody and the good order and management of the prison—and shall enforce the same humanity and mildness in the conduct of the other officers of the prison." (Oxford Quarter Sessions.) The salary of the governor was set at £280 a year, but in 1841 we read: "in consideration of the good conduct, assiduity, economical management and attention to discipline observable in Commander Robins, the governor, his salary is to be raised from £280 to £350".

Thus the years 1830–40 were critical in determining the role of the governor in the prison. The free position of Dilley had been replaced by the controlled rule of Robins. From 1840 the work of the governor was characterised by accounts, paper work, supervision and efficiency. The pressure from the centre thus forced the administration of the prison into a definite bureaucratic mould.

The governor was assisted by a staff, the numbers of which tended to vary with the prison population. In 1823 there were four turnkeys, a watchman and a matron—scarcely enough to supervise the 117

prisoners lodged in the gaol during the January of that year. By 1834, however, there were two more turnkeys added to the staff and a resident surgeon and chaplain were also employed. In the next eight years the number of the staff was raised to 17 with the addition of a porter, schoolmaster, servant, storekeeper, deputy governor and an extra watchman. This number did not remain constant, and after 1855 several were paid off because of the drop in the admission rate. In 1855 a general salary raise took place—the chaplain was raised from £150 to £250 a year, the surgeon from £90 to £136, the chief warder from £40 to £50, and the matron from £40 to £50. These awards were made by the local bench after a recommendation from the visiting committee. The staff in 1860 consisted of the governor, chaplain, surgeon, deputy governor, assistant teacher who was also the clerk, storekeeper, schoolmaster, principal warder, trade instructor, lodge porter, five turnkeys, nurse, cook, stoker, servant, matron and her assistant. The prison was very well staffed at this time, but nevertheless complaints of overwork continued to occur.

The staff were responsible to the governor solely during the early part of the century. But after 1835 promotion depended on the decision of the magistrates and thus a dual allegiance was owed to the governor and his superordinates, the bench or the Prison Commission. Thus a memo of April 1895 ran: "Seven officers applied to have their allow-

ance raised—will submit their application to the Commissioners when next in London". In 1896 two applications were made to the inspectors for promotion and both were referred to the Commission. Prison staff were thus divided in their loyalties—perhaps this was an effective way of checking an independent governor.

The daily routine of the prison was under the direct supervision of the staff who oversaw labour, meals, and discipline. In the early part of the century the prisoners were left to do as they pleased, as long as they did not escape and were not troublesome. The consistent complaints about rowdiness from the neighbouring householders indicate a general lack of control. But here again the 1830's saw the application of labour- non association-religion-discipline ideas, and the life of the prisoners became formally organised on this basis. The labour consisted of unproductive work on a crank, a capstan and a treadmill. The debtors were not expected to work and spent their time in the two debtors' yards. The first two treadmills were set up in 1829 at a cost of £350, and by 1839 each prisoner was working an average of seven hours and 40 minutes a day, that is to say 8,280 steps on the treadmill for those adjudged to hard labour. Women appear to have been employed on more productive work such as laundering the prison clothes, while those not at hard labour were ordered to such tasks as sweeping, cleaning, painting or gardening. In 1838 the governor

went to Gloucester to study the method whereby three-fifths of the hard labour prisoners worked the treadmill while the others did drill in silence. After a period a change-over took place and the process began over again. The mill was divided into compartments so that communication was impossible. This system changed little until the Prison Act of 1898. An extract from the governor's report of 1896 reads: "Hard labour of the first class consists of the treadwheel, cell cranks and hand mills. Second class labour consists of oakum picking, wood chopping, gardening and laundry work when not sufficient women. The females have been employed at laundry, needlework, repairing and cleaning". Rules 185 and 186 of the prison ran: "All male prisoners adjudged to hard labour shall work at the treadwheel or crank or at any other labour assigned to them by the governor for eight hours every day from 29th September to 25th March and from thence to the 29th September for nine hours every day". "All male prisoners not adjudged to hard labour but who are upon a prison sentence may be employed at any work or labour not severe provided that no prisoner who is not so adjudged shall be placed on the treadwheel or cranks" (1860 Oxford Prison Rules.) It is obvious from a cursory examination of the records that nearly all were "adjudged to hard labour".

Work was the means of the redemption of souls; but the labourer was liable to need a full trencher.

The problem of feeding the prisoners was a great one, and the local Oxford merchants to whom the contracts were given must have done very well out of them. In 1823 the diet was as follows: one and a half pounds of bread and one and a half ounces of cheese every day. On Sundays meat, soup and vegetables were provided, and in addition every prisoner was allowed $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of oatmeal a week. The cost was 2s. 4d. per prisoner per week. By 1839 the meat allowance was $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. a week and three pints of soup were also provided. Fourteen pints of gruel were allowed weekly in summer, $17\frac{1}{2}$ in winter. In 1841 the bread allowance was raised to $10\frac{1}{2}$ pounds in every seven days with the addition of $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of peas. Most of the vegetables came from the prison garden. At the same time it was laid down that every prisoner should receive on admission a prison dress of wool, two shirts, two pairs of stockings, a cap and shoes. Extra rations were permitted those who had especially distinguished themselves.

The problem of accommodation was perennial. In 1827 there were 206 prisoners in the gaol at one time who were housed in 130 cells and two rooms each holding 12. The new attitudes to association demanded that each prisoner should have a cell of his own, and the 19th century building programme in Oxford was an attempt to put this into operation. In 1829 three open arcades had to be converted into sleeping cells for the felons, and

throughout the period the numbers continued to rise. In 1852 the highest number in the prison was at the beginning of January and it was 221; in 1854 it was 224. To house these large numbers a patchwork building was continually operated. But finally, after 10 new cells had been constructed in 1824, and other changes had been made in the 1830's, it was decided to plan far-reaching alterations. In 1842 gas was installed, and between 1848 and 1856 £30,000 was spent on new cells and important extensions. The problem of overcrowding was considerably reduced by this.

The prison was run according to a set of regulations which were drawn up by the local bench and based on silence, obedience, abstinence and deterrence. These rules dealt with every facet of prison life. Before 1860 there was no final rule book, for the magistrates tended to add rules as they saw fit. The 1860 compendium of regulations consisted of all the old directives from the bench with some additions. Some of these bench directives are interesting as examples of penal practice: "Persons who have been acquitted on grounds of insanity shall not be confined in the gaol or house of correction"; "no prisoner shall be discharged from prison if labouring under any acute or dangerous distemper nor until in the opinion of the surgeon such discharge is safe unless such prisoner shall desire to be discharged". In 1834 it was ruled that all prisoners who were serving a sentence of less than

a month should be placed in solitary confinement for their sentence "in order to instil into them a dread of ever being committed again and to guard against that contamination which is often seen to more than counteract the good effects of imprisonment". When the Prison Commission took over the gaol it became the practice to send directives to the governor which, although not formal rules, were very seldom disregarded. In May 1897 a directive read: "A prisoner may be allowed to be visited by not more than three friends at each visit," or September 1897, "on the day of admission the prisoner gets a special diet. This is not to count against any other diet". These directives, the most interesting of which concern the conscientious objectors in the Great War, were sent to the governor and were implemented by him.

Breach of the rules led to punishment. This usually took the form of confinement, whipping or dietary restriction. Thus in September 1823 we read "John Ellson confined to his cell for getting on the water closet and hallowing to prisoners in yard five and for repeated insolence to prison officers as well as to myself". December 1824 "John Jones and William Kevin confined to solitary confinement for disorderly conduct and gambling". There were two forms of confinement in 1839 when 66 men and seven women were sent to the dark cells and 64 men and seven women were sent to the solitary cells. It appears that the dark cells

were used to punish less serious breaches of the rules—the most unpleasant punishments were whipping and the solitary cells. The most usual offences were refusal to obey the silence rule, refusal to work, or insolence. Commander Robins was a hard taskmaster, for the records of 1841 show that over 100 prisoners were punished. If there was a question of more serious punishment the visiting committee had to be consulted. Later more varied punishments were added to dark and solitary confinement, whipping and placing in irons. One of these was loss of stage, class or privilege—51 men suffered this in 1896. All punishments had to be recorded in the journal.

Finally, the prison was expensive to run. In the early part of the century it was fashionable to make donations to the gaol. In 1805 a certain Miss Mather left £400 to

the City of Oxford and directed that the interest should be spent on necessities for the prisoners. Many of the university colleges sent food or soup for the men. The real expenses came from the city and county treasury or the government after 1860 and these were formidable. In the Michaelmas quarter of 1834 food alone cost £448 7s. 0d. The total cost of the gaol in 1839 was £2,576 6s. 1½d. It was reckoned that each prisoner cost a shilling and a penny a day. The cost of the prison remained consistently high, costing £2,499 11s. 6d. for 1896. In any case the State had been paying large sums to the local authorities since the middle of the century; the politicians and reformers realised that if change was necessary it would have to be paid for and, in any case, financial control was a very effective method of securing complete control.

Some Statistical Criminological Observations on the Prisoners in Oxford Castle during the Nineteenth Century with special reference to the years 1840–1845 and 1895–1898

Crime was essentially an agricultural affair, and the Oxfordshire catchment area was a very important farming territory. Most crimes consisted of poaching, theft and assault. To the magistrates of the period the most dangerous form of deviance was the property offence, for this struck at the heart of the bourgeois aristocratic capitalist society which characterised 19th century England. Thus we find such extraordinary sentences as

that passed on James Harris on April 13, 1843—he was transported for seven years for the theft of a saucepan in Oxford since “he is a very improper person to be allowed to remain here”. Protection of society was the basis of criminological theory, and the thief threatened society as much as the traitor. “The learned judge in passing sentence told the prisoner John Gorton that some few years ago he would have forfeited his

life for the offence and as it was an aggravated offence and but very little doubt that he belonged to some notorious gang of horse stealers it would be the duty of the court to pass the heaviest sentence on him that the law allowed. He was therefore transported for life" (Summer Assizes 1843).

Penal methods changed in the 19th century. In 1832 capital punishment was abolished for coining and in 1833 for housebreaking. Gradually the more savage aspects of the system such as the pillory, public execution, transportation, gave way to the idea that criminality cannot be excised by brutality; some intelligent people even hazarded the opinion that it might be increased by such measures. Local attitudes remained fairly set for the bench was largely made up of landowners, clergy and capitalists who had little to gain by adapting their ideas to those of the radicals. "In our opinion the want of a good sound moral and religious education is one of the chief causes of crime". The emphasis on religion and the work of the chaplain which is one of the more ancient parts of our modern system thus trace a direct origin to this theory that all criminal deviance was a conscious transgression of a moral socio-ethical Christian code which was known by all and which forbade theft and idleness but encouraged and rewarded lawful acquisition by business methods. Somehow the criminal had failed to understand these precepts which

encouraged the rape of Africa but bitterly opposed the rape of a saucepan. Therefore he must be taught by those who were best qualified—the priests. He must be kept in silence so that he might meditate, he must be put to labour so that the value of good sturdy work should teach him his errors and lead him to reform, he must go to worship on Sundays so that he might be forgiven. Society must be protected, but if possible the soul must be saved. For this purpose of redemption, protection and deterrent imprisonment was best suited. For the most terrible aberrations capital punishment and transportation served to remove the deviant from the omnipotent property owning society he had so deeply offended. "January 5, 1843: George Nelves this day sentenced at Oxford to 10 years transportation for the theft of three tame ducks—removed to the Millbank".

Crime was thus, in the main, seen as a deliberate calculated action for profit. Recidivism was believed to indicate insanity "the calendar of the Summer Assizes of 1896 was a light one. The case of Michael Ryan is typical, we fear, of many criminal careers. It surely shows insanity that a man should choose to spend about a third of his life in prison for paltry thefts" (Jackson's Oxford Journal). The law took cognisance of insanity and those who were unfit to plead were usually sent to the asylum at Hook Norton or Littlemore. "February 26, 1842: Samuel Petty indicted at the Lent

Assizes for unlawfully assaulting a girl under 10 years of age with intent to carnally know and abuse, but acquitted by the jury on the ground that he was insane at the time of committing the offence. He is to remain in strict custody until Her Majesty's pleasure respecting him be known".

Violence was a different matter. In this period the way to settle a quarrel was with fists, and even assault of the police rarely led to a sentence of more than a month. To the age of John Bull a man ought to be able to "hold his own in a mill". The classical prize fighting era of Gentleman Jim lies at the beginning of our period and the violence which characterised the calendars of the Quarter Sessions was looked upon with a lenient eye. But as a French contemporary wrote: "In England, if you knock a man down it is a trifling affair—but if you knock him down and take his handkerchief you are risking your neck". Burglary and robbery with violence were regarded as the worst crimes for these were calculated; sexual crimes were abhorred and misunderstood—those convicted of rape, carnal knowledge, bestiality, etc., were exposed to the full vengeance of the law and often pronounced insane. It was known that a man could not be convicted unless he had a guilty mind, and this had been a tradition of English law for many hundreds of years. But the courts were unwilling to consider this in property cases—

less relevance. In 1896 when a New College undergraduate was convicted of a third offence of theft the magistrate commented "it is not the province of the courts of justice to embark upon psychological enquiries".

The most serious crimes of murder, rape, burglary and robbery with violence were extremely rare in Oxford. Of seven selected months between 1840 and 1845, only three show admissions for sexual crimes and only one of the four recorded was rape. The other three were carnal knowledge, or bestiality. Serious cases of robbery, viz. burglary or with violence seem to have occurred more frequently than sexual crimes, but they are still uncommon. The highest admission rate for such an offence in any of the months selected was four in July 1843. Easily the most common crimes were those associated with petty theft—that is to say poaching, trespass with intent to poach, seizure of food from fields, theft of small articles or sums of money. The admission rate for this type of offence is very high—39 in January 1845; 30 in March 1842, and never falling below 19 in any of the months. Violence, failure to pay bastardy orders, misbehaviour in the workhouse at Banbury figure highly in the statistics, but the offenders under these categories seldom number more than 10 per month for each one: only in January were there 20 admissions for misbehaviour in the Banbury workhouse. It appears from the records that a riot took place in

which the master and porter were assaulted and windows were smashed. Vandalism occurred relatively infrequently in court records and the average monthly intake was about two, although in the January of 1844 and 1845 the numbers rose to seven and six respectively. Drunkenness and vagrancy were probably considered not worth the trouble of arrest and prosecution so that the statistical average of three per month possibly presents a distorted picture.

A similar month sample from 1895-98 indicates the same conviction picture for murder and rape. Robbery with violence rose to about four intakes a month. The most common crimes were now drunkenness and vagrancy, which we considered together as characteristic of the same socio-psychological problems of anomic isolation or unattachment. For such offences the monthly intake rose from two to 15 on average. This may have been the result of religious pressures as was to be the case with regard to the incest laws passed a few years later. Population increase must, of course, be considered with regard to the exact numerical rise of pure admission figures. A slight decrease in vandalism, work house offences and petty theft is observable, but sexual crime, family desertion and failure to pay bastardy orders remain constant.

The criminal of Oxfordshire came from the lowest social class. We graded him in the survey according to his occupation which was felt to be a fair indication of his class.

Class IV consists of manual labourers, farm workers, pedlars or hawkers, and members of the Forces (in the 1840's). Class III of small traders, skilled workers such as saddle makers or tailors, shopkeepers, apprentices, and domestic servants, and in the 1890's members of the Forces. Class II of farmers and teachers, etc. Class I of professional men, capitalists and gentry. In March 1842, 78 per cent of the admissions were class IV, 19½ per cent class III, 2½ per cent class II and nil per cent class I. January 1845 was a month of heavy admissions and saw a respective percentage of 90, 10, nil, nil. In the later sample a similar pattern was observed: for July 1895 the class comparison was 70 per cent, 27½ per cent, nil per cent and 2½ per cent; in January 1896 it was 74½ per cent, 22½ per cent, nil per cent and 3 per cent. In these figures, debtors were not included. The pattern is one of total over-representation of the lower two classes and a corresponding under-representation of the upper two. Two points are interesting: The first is that in the later period there were more admissions under classes one and two, the reason for which might be the breakdown of class autocracy which began in the 19th century. The second is that wherever such an admission occurs it is generally accompanied by such white collar crimes as fraud or embezzlement.

During this century Oxford Castle served men, women and juveniles. In the report of the

inspectors the numbers at the time of the governor's return at the end of 1841 were as follows: four juveniles, of whom one was under 12 years of age, 43 men and four women between 17 and 21, 17 women and 72 men between 21 and 30 and 70 men and 12 women over 30. This again does not include debtors and shows the usual female under-representation in criminal activity. The 1842 registers show 13 boys and two girls under 14 years of age, 176 men and 29 women between 14 and 21, 244 men and 32 women between 21 and 30 and finally 228 men and 32 women over 30 as the total intake. Later, juveniles who were under 17 tended to be sent to reformatory. In 1861 we read: "During the quarter two juveniles have been sent from the prison to the reformatory at Redhill". There were large numbers of women in the prison and these had to be specially protected against abuse—not even the governor could enter the women's yard unless accompanied by the matron or her deputy. As can be seen, the numbers were great; the daily average of prisoners for 1851 was 130 men, 15 women and 13 debtors; for 1860 it was 43 men, eight women and four debtors, a drop which necessitated the paying off of several warders. The highest number at any time present in the gaol during 1853 was 190 men, 18 women and 12 debtors. The numbers of annual admissions do not show a great change: 581 for 1841, 777 for 1844, 584 for 1846, 635 for 1896 and 554 for 1897.

Sentences were short, for any criminal whose crime deserved over two years was either transported or sent to the hulks or removed to the Millbank or Pentonville. All serious crimes were thus marked in the journal "sentenced to seven years transportation," or "removed to the hulk Justiciar," or "sentenced to life transportation—removed to the Millbank". Consequently although all criminals passed through the gaol pending removal where serious crimes were concerned and are thus included in statistics for crime prevalence in the county, they are not included in statistics dealing with actual resident offenders in the castle. A few notes on the harsher punishments might be of interest, however. Transportation, before its abolition, was not uncommon. In July 1843, four offenders received this sentence for burglary. In July 1845, five sentences of transportation were passed. It is not proposed to treat capital punishment as there are no available records. Most persons in Oxford Castle were serving one month or under—thus admissions in January 1844 show 24 sentences of less than 22 days; 34 of one month; nine between one and three months; two of six months and only four of over a year—none of whom were serving more than 18 months. In the 1840-45 sample only one man was doing a stretch of more than 18 months, and he was doing two years. The 1895 sample shows a similar pattern: July 1895 saw 31 admissions for under 22 days; 11 for one month;

two for between one and three months; and one for a year. For any long term sentences which occurred, and we found very few, the offender was sent on to a penitentiary.

The most surprising statistic was reconviction rates. It was extremely important to find reconviction rates, but none of the documents even considered the question. It was purely by chance that the rates we did find came to light at all for the governor had taken the trouble to jot down the previous convictions of the prisoners in the journal of 1848-52. Of 86 admissions in February 1849, 41 had previous convictions: 22 had one, three had three, seven had four, four had five, five had over five and one had 10 previous prison sentences. Of 82 admissions for October 1850, 48 had a criminal record of whom only four had more than five previous convictions. Since these figures are typical of the sample available, it suggests that the reconviction rate was over half for this period. It also appears that these offenders had in fact previous prison records since criminal offences rarely drew fines in the 19th century.

Few offenders appear to have been wholly literate—of those committed to Oxford Castle by the 1843 assizes and sessions for the summer quarter, 78 adult men and 10 women were unable to read or write; 41 adult men and 9 women could read only; 83 men and 11 women could read and write imperfectly; and only six men could

read and write well. They also appear to have been predominantly single: of the admissions for October 1845, 15 were married, four were widowed and 37 were single. In April 1848, 10 were married and 60 were single. Most of the sentences were to hard labour: in 1841, 69 per cent of the adult men received hard labour, 23 per cent were unemployed and eight per cent were at light labour. Sixty-seven per cent of the women were at hard labour, 23 per cent were unemployed and 10 per cent were at light labour. Prison was not a very healthy place, and in 1841 there were five deaths and 241 men and 37 women were sent to the prison infirmary for treatment.

Punishments in prison were frequent. In 1839, 66 men and seven women were put in the dark cells, 64 men and seven women in the solitary cells and one man was whipped. Of the juveniles, 16 boys and two girls were sent to the dark cells and 12 boys and one girl to the solitary cells. 1841 saw 97 dark cell punishments, six solitary confinements and four whippings. Confinement punishments were attended by diet reductions. It does not appear to have been the practice to whip women.

Finally, it appears that the numbers of debtors confined in the prison underwent gradual reduction as the century wore on. Thus there were 51 debtors who served time in Oxford in 1843, yet the monthly average in the 1890's was only one. Perhaps even before the passing of the

bankruptcy laws the practice of confining debtors in the gaol in Oxford had long since passed away except for extreme cases. It is extremely difficult to find out very much about debtors since they had no particulars entered against their names—only the word “debtor” in large capitals. They did not have to work, they were allowed to associate and talk, and the regime was not as hard for them as it was for the criminal offender against the penal laws. They were not included in the statistics.

CONCLUSION

Writing the history of a local prison in the 19th century presents certain difficulties. Firstly, it is extremely difficult to present a picture of the routine daily life of the prisoners since the necessary evidence does not exist. Furthermore, the evidence is not always trustworthy: the visiting committee may claim that the “state and condition of the gaol is good,” but often there are no reports of inspectors to give a more reliable and crisp account of the problems in the prison. It is necessary to be extremely careful of the surviving evidence. In addition to this one must be wary of the statistical information provided by the inspectors’ and governors’ reports. It is not at all clear how far the figures are valid for Oxfordshire—the catchment area certainly included the whole of the county, but it is possible that other courts such as the Henley or Witney Quarter Sessions committed pri-

soners to other gaols in the county. Thus it is not possible to use the figures in any general survey of law and order in Victorian Oxfordshire. In fact they can only be used with reference to the castle itself.

Besides this, the survey has not provided the answers to a large number of questions. The exact effect of nationalisation on the lives of the prisoners is not clear. Before the Prison Act of 1898 it is difficult to find anything which would have made a great difference to their everyday lives. In addition to this there seems to be no clear indication of why crime occurred more in summer than in winter between 1840 and 1845, while there is no difference seasonally between 1895 and 1898. Climatic change or progress in national housing may explain this. Furthermore, we had no national yardstick with which to compare the progress in Oxford Castle with that made in other prisons. Surprisingly there is no published history of a local prison in existence. It is suspected that Oxford may have been fairly advanced relatively.

We tried to select months which were typical of general trends in the last part of the survey, but in any case we were restricted by the amount of evidence available. It is to be hoped that the numerous questions begged by this survey will be answered by an intensive investigation of penal practice in Oxfordshire in this period, and that in such a survey this short paper will provide at least a starting point from which to advance.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

Journals of Admission; Gaoler's Journal (1823-7) at Oxford Castle and Public Record Office.

Reports of Visiting Committees; Assize and Quarter Session Records at County Council Record Office.

Commissioners' and Inspectors' Minute Books at Oxford Castle.

Local Newspapers; Jackson's Oxford Journal; Oxford Times at Oxford City Library.

Reports of Home Office Inspectors; Reports of Prison Commissioners; Returns connected with Parliamentary surveys; Prison Statutes; The Glad-

stone Report; The Jebb Report, all located in Parliamentary papers.

Benefactions to the Prison at Oxford Library.

Map of the Prison (1858) at Oxford Castle.

Secondary Sources

Quinton: *Crime and Criminals*.

Radzinowicz: *History of the Criminal Law*.

Webb: *English Prison System*.

English Historical Documents for the 19th century.

Woodward and Ensor: Two volumes in the Oxford History of England.

Contributors

W. P. ROBINSON, born 1933, England. Oxford M.A. (Psychology and Philosophy), D. Phil.; Research Officer, London School of Economics, 1960-61; Lecturer in Social Psychology, Hull, 1961-65; Deputy Head, Sociological Research Unit, Institute of Education, London, 1965-66; Lecturer in Social Psychology, University of Southampton, 1966-; Research and Publications upon the origins and measurement of the achievement motive; social factors and language in adolescents and children. Currently engaged with S. J. Rackstraw in a study of the form and content of children's questions and answers.

F. E. EDWARDS, Senior Probation Officer, City of Liverpool Probation and After care Service, has worked as a probation officer in Liverpool prison.

MRS. G. M. F. BISHOP, 23 years a magistrate, received the O.B.E. last year. She represented the Magistrates' Association on a Ford Foundation visit to the U.S.A.

W. J. FORSYTHE, MISS J. COTON and ANN JAMES were all trained at Barnet House, Oxford. Previously Mr. Forsythe had read history at Cambridge; he is now a probation officer with Southampton Probation Service.

Miss Coton, formerly British vice-consul in South Vietnam, is now a child care officer in Tower Hamlets, London.

Ann James, a child care officer at Islington, is a Canadian and read history at Montreal University.

K. MOTHERSOLE is a principal officer at Pentonville.

M. R. E. OWEN, the assistant director responsible for the founding of this Journal, died earlier this year.

At the Requiem Mass in the Chapel of H.M. Prison, Wormwood Scrubs, Mr. M. S. Gale, assistant director, gave an appreciation of Mr. Owen's life and work which the Editorial Board is privileged to print as their tribute to a colleague and friend.

Drugs and Pentonville

K. MOTHERSOLE

TWO MONTHS AGO it was decided to study the problems of addicts and people who have dabbled in drugs. The smokers of cannabis we did not investigate. We concentrated on the heroin and pill addicts.

The findings of this study possibly apply to most of our prisons.

It became apparent that the one advantage prison has had not been capitalised—"a drug-free environment". Most of the addicts who were interviewed had at some period attempted to end addiction. This has been attempted during periods in hospital. Hospitals are not drug free. Addicts speak of having drugs both legally and illegally, whilst purporting to attempt a cure. Even in locked wards, drugs were fairly easy to obtain. Not surprising that two or three days was the longest period off drugs.

Consider prison. Addicts are admitted, pass through reception, then hospital. When the withdrawal period has been completed, they are placed in normal location. So unwillingly the cure was begun. I am not naive enough to say it is impossible to obtain drugs in

prison, but the price and general poverty of the addicts admitted to Pentonville leaves 99 per cent out of the running.

So we have addicts who have been off drugs for some weeks. Are we in fact taking enough advantage of this fact? Pentonville decided to pursue this point of a drug free period. It was found that many addicts stated that they felt fit and well and expressed a wish to end addiction.

The problem was how could we help and with what?

At all times we were conscious of the fact that most of the addicts had been seen by psychiatrists and psychologists and had been treated. Many and varied reasons had been given as to why addiction started, but whatever the reason the problem remained the same. He is still addicted and may well remain so.

It was decided that a common sense approach to the problem may well be an avenue to explore. Our common sense approach became *reality therapy*. The words "irresponsible—responsible" became the factors we would work on.

Addicts who expressed a desire to end addiction were told that taking drugs was irresponsible and until you accept that fact and become responsible you will remain addicted. To this aim group therapy and personal relationship is all we laymen can offer in prison, but for the addict with a genuine desire to remain off drugs on release we can offer more. For the homeless we obtain accommodation in a hostel staffed by people who have a real interest in these problems, and understanding. No religious instruction will be given, but you will be helped, with one proviso: Should you revert to drugs again you have finished. There is no second chance, all the sympathy and understanding in the world cannot make amends for the months off drugs.

Prior to entering the hostel the addict is interviewed by the warden. Again the situation is explained. Before the addict decides to accept, he is taken to the hostel and sits in with the house committee. He is asked before the meeting whether he objects to his problem being discussed. The committee, of course, is comprised of the residents.

The final phase will be the setting up of a meeting place, which will be divorced from the prison and hostel. All discharged addicts will be given the address. It is hoped that some benefit may result.

With this project, the governor has had the full co-operation of the hospital, welfare and hostel personnel. Without that, nothing could have been achieved.