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CONSTRUCTIVE FACTORS IN THE LIFE OF THE PRISONER

HENRY E. FIELD AND RICHARD S. WINSLOW¹

INTRODUCTION

In most of the studies, surveys, and other commentaries on penal institutions, the tendency has been to emphasize the bare outline of regime and the purely negative factors in the life of a prisoner. Little effort has been made to present a systematic appraisal of conditions which operate to prevent deterioration or to stimulate development. We have been made aware of the deficiencies of the conventional prison. Has fair account been taken of the merits and constructive factors? If progress is to be made by growth within the present general framework rather than by any wholesale discarding or traditional policies—and on the whole we regard this as a reasonable assumption—the valuable features of present procedure as well as the deficiencies, errors, and misplaced emphases should be weighed. Not only are the formally stated correctional policies to be taken into account but also the conditions which operate without conscious planning or appreciation. In the present paper attempt is made to describe some of the constructive influences and opportunities to be found at the Massachusetts State Prison. By constructive influences are meant those circumstances which either prevent deterioration of the individual or develop new capacities and attitudes favorable to normal social participation.

SECTION I

FACTORS WHICH IN THE PRESENT FUNCTIONING OF THE INSTITUTION
MAY REASONABLY BE TERMED CONSTRUCTIVE

Security as a Basis of Reformation

This prison, containing about 900 inmates, has proved an efficient machine from the point of view of preventing escapes and of securing conformity to routine and discipline. Stability is virtually a prerequisite of an effective rehabilitative program. The security of the institution has been taken for granted by the majority of the

¹State Department of Correction, Boston, Mass.

inmates, and the human relationships within are little affected by the fact that in the last analysis the group is held by bars, guns, and gas. The maintenance of security upon such a basis need not be incompatible with conscientiousness, friendliness, repose, and other constructive attitudes. Rehabilitative effort on the part of the administration must, of course, imply the exertion of pressure upon the inmate and on these grounds some resentment may arise. It means that requests for privileges (transfer, for example) will be carefully evaluated; standards of workmanship and behavior will be insisted upon; recommendations for parole will be withheld unless there be evidence of change in social attitude; the authority to supervise men on parole and, when proper, to return them to prison will be exercised; social investigation and scientific enquiry will be encouraged. There is an ever-present temptation for administrators to avoid rehabilitative efforts likely to prove unpleasant, in order to placate inmate opinion. In some of the above respects, this institution has been exerting an increased pressure without producing any serious resistance.

Routine and Discipline

The routine and discipline are exacting, but more because of their steadiness than because of their harshness. They are to some extent punitive due more to the necessities of management in such a situation than to a deliberate punitive policy. Friction is normal to most human relationships whether the situation be the family, school, or workshop, but due to the highly concentrated social life this is very much accentuated in the prison. There are many irritants and few psychological compensations. Disputes and fights occur rather frequently in spite of measures taken to prevent them. Small grievances, real or imagined, very easily inflame the resentment of a significantly large number towards confinement so that group resistance to authority appears.

The prisoners arise before 7:00 A. M. are released to obtain their breakfast, return to their cells to eat, and put their rooms in order. At about 8:10 A. M., they march to the shops, leaving their dishes and buckets on the way. Work begins at about 8:30 A. M. and lasts until 11:30 A. M. At 11:45 A. M. they march to their cells, getting their food on the way. Between noon and 1:00 P. M. they eat, smoke, rest, and read. Then again they march to the shops and work from about 1:15 P. M. to 4:00 P. M. Between 4:15 P. M. and 4:45 P. M. the inmates are given the freedom of the yard. On

Saturdays and holidays, an hour and a half is allowed for recreation. At 4:45 P. M. they march to get their supper and take it to their cells. Between 5:00 P. M. and 9:00 P. M. they eat, smoke, read, go to school, or engage in other avocations. At 9:00 P. M. the lights are put out. Men doing special work or holding trusted positions may be exempted from part of the routine. For example, some of the clerks and gardeners may remain out of their rooms until 8:00 P. M., while teachers and others who perform special services are permitted to have their lights on until 10:00 P. M. On Sundays, church services are held in the mornings, followed by an hour and a half in the yard. From then until 7:00 A. M., the men are confined in their cells, except that on an average of once every two weeks outside entertainments are provided on Sunday afternoon.

Since discipline is a major function of the prison, rules are much more explicit and more rigidly enforced than are the laws and conventions of ordinary society. The institution not only trains but also tests individuals in a number of respects. Minimal standards of cleanliness, orderliness, application to work, respect for authority and self-control are secured, if necessary, by punishment.²

Employment

With the exception of two groups, namely, those who are segregated because of trafficking in narcotics, attempting escape, or general dangerousness (about two per cent of the population) and those undergoing punishment, every man who is physically fit is given regular work. Employment falls under two main headings. First, maintenance services, which include messengers, cleaners, kitchen force, and general repair men. On May 31, 1931, 249 were engaged in this sort of labor. Second, there are the industries, which on May 31, 1931, employed 572 men. During the last financial year \$1,056,781.72 worth of goods was sold mainly for state use. The following figures show a typical distribution of men in the prison industries:

Shoe Shop	146
Metal Shop	126

²Punishment is of two sorts. First, there is "heavy solitary," which means solitary confinement in a dark, unfurnished cell on a diet of bread and water for a possible maximum of ten consecutive days. Second, there is indefinite solitary segregation in larger-than-average, well lighted, furnished cells on the regular institution diet. Such segregation is for those involved in trafficking in contraband, escaping or attempting to escape, or general dangerousness. These individuals are given no regular employment, a short period of exercise (one at a time), and all the reading matter desired.

Underwear	74
Clothing	74
Foundry	63
Cement Shop	32
Print Shop	27
Brush Shop	24
Mattress Shop	19
	585
Total	585

The conditions of work and production in some shops are comparable with those of outside industry. The major differences are due to the fact that the shop manager has little choice of employees. He cannot hire and fire. Instead of dismissal unfavorable reports, demotion, or punishment are the measures taken to bring pressure to bear. In a number of respects disciplinary considerations overrule those of production. For example, a skilled machinist may be removed from a shop because it is thought desirable to break up a harmful clique. While there is a wage system, the incentive of earning does not operate strongly. The working day is approximately six and one-half hours and usually a rapid speed of work is not maintained throughout that period. In one of the shops each man is given a daily stint. When work is slack there is no lay-off. A man must remain in the shop, and while not occupied in industrial work, he may be permitted to read, to exercise, or to engage in self-imposed tasks, such as cabinet-making.

On the whole, it appears that considerations of production are given precedence over those of training. In only one department, that of printing, is formal trade training provided. In the others, following the practice of most industrial concerns, individuals are taught a number of specific operations. However, in many cases a man who shows interest in the work, and who, if necessary, has initiative to request advancement, may make systematic progress from operation to operation and from machine to machine. Individuals showing a desire to improve themselves can obtain a transfer if deemed advisable by the Deputy Warden who is in full charge of the assignment of men. In certain departments, for example, the clothing shop, many inmates feel that the work is more suitable for women or that it is not being conducted on the ordinary industrial basis. The tasks in such cases are regarded as almost punitive. Most of the occupations, however, are such as to give to the men a sense of participating in a normal industrial enterprise. In common with that

of the working man, the self-respect of the prisoner depends upon his being able to view his work as important and of a kind which is valued in the community.

Reports were secured from the foremen concerning quality and conduct of workmen, type of training offered, and the use of time when orders are slack. The head of the shoe shop supplied the following information: As to the quality of the working force, of one hundred forty-six, ninety are rated as "fair" or "better" workmen. Of these, forty who have obtained their training here, would be rated as "skilled" in an outside factory. Thirty-six were graded "incompetent"; incompetence being due in many cases to lack of training. Twenty were rated "indifferent" or "uncooperative." The percentage of lazy is very small. Indifference is a much more important factor with which to contend. There are fifteen standard shoe machines in use here which are found in shops throughout the country.

The group of eighteen productive men in the print shop is classified as follows: Ten have no interest other than in learning just enough to hold the job to which they are assigned. Five show varying degrees of interest and will probably develop into good printers. Three could be recommended as able to fill a journeyman's position.

In the clothing shop thirty-seven are rated as fair or better; twenty-two as incompetent; fifteen as lazy, indifferent, or incompetent.

Considering the shops as a whole, it is found that three hundred and ninety-three are rated as fair or better workmen; one hundred and twenty-one as incompetent; seventy-one as lazy, indifferent, and uncooperative. One hundred and thirty men do work for themselves when their services are not required by the shop foreman. These figures show that a large percentage of the men are at least capable of applying themselves to work. Of those employed in maintenance work a number are exposed to temptation of various kinds. There are about forty "runners."³ This position, while calling for little skill offers opportunities to steal from other inmates or from the institution. Other positions, of considerable responsibility in the prison are held by inmates. For example, there are thirty clerks who are in a position to do harm to the institution. In odd cases, an individual whose attitude is somewhat antagonistic is permitted to continue in a trusted position because he is judged sufficiently prudent to value the privileges which go with such work.

³A "runner" acts as messenger, carries laundry, books, food, and other articles to the cells.

In addition, twenty or thirty men are sometimes employed outside the wall. Every shop has its "key" men. Responsibility and mutual trust tend to bring out something akin to comradeship between inmates and members of the staff. In the matter of responsible positions, there is considerable individualization. For example, the inmate teamster takes the horses to an outside blacksmith without supervision, and an inmate engineer takes care of the refrigeration plant. Besides the privileged positions, for which individuals are required to demonstrate their fitness, transfer to less rigid institutions is an incentive to conscientious effort. Strongest and most persistent of these incentives, however, is the hope of release on parole.

The Economic Motive

Under a law which came into operation in 1929, wages are paid to prisoners out of the profits of the industries. (See Mass. General Laws Chapter 387, Section 48A.) One-quarter of the amount the prisoner may spend on purchases through the institution's store. One-half may be allotted to dependents and the balance is retained for the prisoner at the time of his release. The following figures, showing the average wage earned per year by each inmate, are based upon the total amounts of wages paid out and the average number of inmates in the institution, excluding the small percentage not gainfully employed because of undergoing punishment or hospital confinement. In 1929, the first year of the operation of the wage law, the total amount of wages paid to inmates was \$42,419.42. It so happened that the law went into operation at such a time as to allow only eleven months of work that year. With a daily average of about nine hundred gainfully employed, the average wage earned per man for that year (eleven months) was \$47.13. In 1930 the total amount of wages paid to inmates was \$55,907.98, with a daily average of about eight hundred and fifty having been gainfully employed throughout the year. The average wage, therefore, for 1930 was \$65.90. In 1931 the total amount of wages paid out was \$51,929.85, with a daily average of about eight hundred and seventy having been gainfully employed throughout the year. The average wage, therefore, for 1931 was \$59.68.

The allotments to dependents which the inmates were allowed to make under the provisions of the law were as follows for 1930:

Wives	112
Children	21

Parents	189
Others	110
	432
Total	432

The wage system is a factor in keeping the economic motive alive. A little help can be given dependents from this source and also a sum of money is made available to aid re-establishment in the community at the time of release. Furthermore, almost all are enabled to avail themselves in some measure of commissary privileges.

There are other activities in the prison which have an economic significance. One hundred and seventy individuals take part in the making and sale of tables, boxes, canes, leather goods, toys, and other articles of commercial value. In about one-third of the cases there enters division of labor and partnership. For example, "A" buys the material for an inlaid table and carries out the first stages of construction before selling his materials and labor to "B", who completes the process and makes the final sale. Provided the inmate has a constructive purpose and there is no threat to the discipline of the institution, the administration permits the purchase of a wide variety of raw materials and tools. Transfer slips play the part of checks in the institution banking system. By this means inmates may receive the rewards of special efforts, engage in financial dealings with each other, and, subject to approval, with outside business firms.

Formal Education

Three evenings a week for a period of two hours the illiterates and others in the first five grades attend school. On two evenings those in the upper elementary grades attend. The school is supervised by two qualified members of the City school system, while problems of discipline are in charge of an officer. The teaching is done by inmates who receive guidance from the supervisors. With the exception of one college graduate the inmate teachers during 1930-31 had a background of about one or two years of high school training. In a large number of cases, the school has to deal with culturally handicapped individuals of poor innate equipment, including many foreigners. Furthermore, the teaching is done in the chapel where there are no desks and no partitions to separate the classes. The figures for the school year 1930-31 show something of the working of this department.

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Promoted</i>	<i>Retarded</i>	<i>New Men</i> ⁴
Grade 1	43	26	14	3
Grade 2	14	9	3	2
Grade 3	16	8	5	3
Grade 4	13	8	4	1
Grade 5	7	4	3	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	93	55	29	9
Grade 6	40	22	10	8
Grade 7	29	24	5	
Grade 8	10	10	0	
Grade 9	11	9		2
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	90	65	15	10
Total	183	120	44	19

Individuals above the elementary school level are offered courses covering a wide range of subjects by the University Extension Service. This work is carried on by correspondence, assignments are corrected and rated, and certificates are given for successful completion. In the year 1930-31, about sixty extension courses were provided in the budget. Applications have far exceeded the number of courses that have been granted. Individuals desiring courses apply to the officer in charge of conduct in the school. This official inquires into the applicant's educational background and decides upon the merits of the case.

Until recently vocational training has been confined to the actual working in the shop. In February, 1931, the instructor of the print shop submitted to the administration plans for a class in various aspects of printing. The plans were approved and twelve men were permitted to take the course, classes being held twice a week in the evenings. The plans have been carried out essentially as suggested in the following excerpt from the shop foreman's proposal:

"The subjects to be taken up should include lectures on the History and Romance of Printing; Composition (hand and machine), Imposition, Press Work, Paper (manufacture, cutting, folding, etc.), Ink (manufacture, kinds, and uses), Estimating Space, Layout, Design, etc. In conjunction with the lectures, the pupils should take notes and quizzes should be held on each subject. To keep up the interest I would have specialists on the various subjects address the class from time to time."

The Library

There is a library of nine thousand volumes, more than a third of which are non-fiction, including philosophy, religion, biography,

⁴The column marked "new men" denotes those who have been in school only a short time, and hence no fair estimate of their work could be made.

sociology, history. A well-arranged and attractively printed catalogue is issued to each inmate. Books may be exchanged three times a week. In only a few cases have these men made use of libraries outside of penal institutions. No record is kept of the books issued to each individual and neither is there record of those who make no use whatsoever of this important part of the institution's equipment. For the year 1930, 43,094 works on fiction were issued. Of these, approximately twenty-five per cent are Western stories and about twenty-five per cent detective stories. 5,763 of the books issued were non-fiction.

One of the chaplains is in charge of the library. Most of his time is, of course, occupied with the important religious activities. Consequently, he can do little more than act as censor, and exercise general supervision over inmate assistants.

Inmates are permitted to receive reading matter from outside bookstores. Discretion is exercised as to the suitability of a book for the inmate who seeks permission to receive it. In practice this policy has been administered liberally and with marked gain to the intellectually superior group. It has meant that books not suitable for the general library shelves have been made available to men capable of benefitting by them and that the disadvantages of there not being an adequate grant for the purchase of books and magazines has been partly offset. Books admitted by special permission must be paid for by the individuals requesting them.

Recreation

Formal entertainment is provided on an average of twice a month, usually on the afternoons of Sundays and holidays. These entertainments are furnished partly for the purpose of diversion and partly in order to permit contact with the outside world. In 1930 there were nineteen afternoons devoted to moving pictures and eight to other forms of entertainment. The former consist of news reels, comedies, boxing, wrestling and selected feature pictures.

On week-day afternoons, the inmates are permitted to mingle freely while walking in the yard (about one acre) for half an hour, and on Sunday mornings about an hour and a half is thus spent. In addition to free conversation, the men indulge in checkers, throwing and catching baseballs, and playing musical instruments. On Saturday afternoons one hour and a half is allowed for recreation, and in the spring, summer, and autumn baseball games are played. During the summer of 1930 the total number of games played was forty-two

and about one hundred twenty individuals took part. The smallness of the recreation area seriously limits athletic activities.

On their own initiative, a small percentage of men take exercises in their cells. Though some of the men undoubtedly receive considerable exercise in the performance of their daily tasks (e. g., in the foundry and cement shop) many do not have a healthy amount of physical movement.

Leisure Activities

Many inmates occupy their leisure time by engaging in various avocations. With the exception of reading, crafts work is perhaps the most important line of effort followed by prisoners. From the shops it is learned that approximately one hundred and thirty make articles in their non-working shop time. Including those who work in their cells at night, it is found that at least one hundred and seventy use these opportunities. Such activities are diversional, educational, or economic in aim, and with some individuals all three motives enter. Conversations with the individual craftsmen show that this work is regarded as a means of reducing the stress of confinement, of earning store privileges, and of helping wives and families. Sometimes the sheer joy of craftsmanship appears as the primary motive. Since penologists are coming to attach great importance to the constructive use of leisure, a few inmates realize also that this is an asset from the point of view of earning parole. While there is a marked stereotypy of design due to the absence of competent instruction, the tables, doll houses, cigar boxes, canes, slippers sent out for sale through friends and relatives provide striking evidence of leisure time well spent.

Another common use of leisure is found in literary activities. Several of the men have written articles and stories for magazines. One individual has written a series of children's poems which are likely to be accepted by one of the large publishing houses. A magazine is published by the inmates each month. In addition to reports on Church services and entertainments, it contains articles and poems. The Chaplain exercises a liberal supervision and, in some cases, matters affecting the welfare of the prison are discussed. An inmate contributor to a recent number argues that men serving life sentences are worthy of fuller opportunities to be tried again in the community and in passing takes up a controversial issue raised by a Boston newspaper.⁵

⁵E. R. S. "Pity the Poor Lifer"; *The Mentor*, June, 1931. Volume XXXII, N. VIII, Page 14.

Music

Both in an organized and an informal way music is an important phase of life in the institution. An inmate choir, consisting of fifteen men, practices twice a week and participates in the Sunday services. There are two orchestras, comprising about twenty players. One provides music for the church services, and the other occasionally plays during Sunday entertainments. Seventy-two men play musical instruments, including piano, violin, mandolin, cornet and saxophone and fifteen play guitars and ukeleles. Members of each orchestra practice in the chapel on two afternoons a week. On Saturday afternoons those who so desire may practice or teach each other in one of the wings. In Cherry Hill, the newest section, which is equipped with sound-proof doors, musicians are permitted to practice during the evening.

Personal Privileges

Some of the amenities of life not incompatible with discipline are permitted. Up to a limit of two dollars a week an inmate may purchase such articles as butter, eggs, lettuce and fruit. Included in the list are sweets and other articles which rate in the luxury class. This arrangement is a privilege which increases the comfort of the individual who has the money to make purchases, and also may be used to aid health and vitality. Articles of personal wear, such as ties, underwear, shoes, may be purchased and used. There is something of an atmosphere of refinement in many of the rooms, which is made possible by permission to buy linoleum, pictures and books.

Contact with the Outside World

The administration is anxious that the visiting and writing privileges be exercised wherever possible. Two one-hour visits for relatives or approved friends are permitted each month, though no children under ten are allowed. When relatives come long distances, special extensions of time are granted almost without exception. The inmate may greet his visitor by shaking hands, kissing, or other seemly method of expressing affection. While all visitors and inmates are under the watchful eye of an officer, and the chairs are arranged side by side, the size of the guardroom and the large number present contribute to make intimate conversation possible without serious interferences. The admission of women under these conditions is significant from a mental hygiene point of view. Investigation of the

visiting records⁶ in March, 1931, showed that approximately seventy members of the present population make virtually no contacts with the outside world through visits; four hundred and fifty receive the full quota of visits (two per month).

An inmate may write four letters per month and may receive an indefinite number. He may also receive newspapers. About three hundred and fifty papers a day pass through the guardroom and only a small percentage of men do not gain regular access to them. Numerous interviews lead one to believe that the moving pictures help to maintain an active interest in the outside world, take the individual from the drab surroundings of the prison, and have a high diversional value. The installation of a radio with earphones in every cell has recently been completed.

Social Case Work

During the past few years steady advance has been made in the range and thoroughness of social investigation. Since June, 1930, there has been in existence an organization known as the Personnel Department whose purpose has been to make complete social studies of inmates to the end that individual treatment might become more effective. Beginning with a staff composed of four recipients of fellowships in the social sciences and three professional social workers, the staff has been augmented during the course of the year to include a director, a psychologist, five professional social workers and one research fellow. Officially the members of this group constitute the Division of Research for the Prevention of Crime, a newly created branch of the State Department of Correction, but at present the main activities of the Division are concentrated at the State Prison and there the organization is referred to as the Personnel Department.

In addition to its great value from the point of view of research, the case history is playing an increasingly important part in the practical work of administration. For example, in determining the safest or most effective places in which to put inmates within the institution, such as place of employment or class in school, the case history is of particular assistance. Then, too, in ascertaining suitability for transfer to other institutions, or for parole, or pardon, good case histories are highly desirable. Important decisions such as the above should be based as nearly as possible upon all the facts in each case.

⁶The cases of men receiving an unusually small number of visits are being looked into with a view to meeting this need.

To gather such facts in a prompt and thorough manner has been the chief aim of the Personnel Department.

Whereas heretofore the case history was confined to relatively few points concerning each inmate, and much reliance was placed upon the inmate's own statements, since March 1, 1931, the Personnel Department has made it possible to have a far more thorough and accurate social and personal investigation than in the past. Furthermore, attempt is continually made to correct and complete past cases which do not come up to a desirable standard.

Each new admission is interviewed within a few days of commitment and a temporary case history is composed upon the basis of the inmate's statements and the information from the commitment papers. This material is then given to the social investigators who contact the courts, police, home, school, and employers, tapping these and other sources of information by interview and correspondence in an attempt to obtain as adequate and well-verified data as possible. Routine use is made of the central source of criminal records at the Board of Probation and at the Bureau of identification and of the central index of social agency contacts. In addition, when available, information is obtained from the Division for Examination of Prisoners, Department of Mental Diseases, probation and parole officers, other penal and correctional institutions, hospitals, etc. The reports of the prison physician and prison psychiatrist are included in every case history.

When this material has been gathered, it is analyzed for deficiencies; the inmate is interviewed; then follows diagnostic summary, statement of the individual's assets and liabilities, and an estimate of his suitability for transfer to other institutions and of his needs both while confined and under parole supervision. Provision is made for record of the inmate's progress during confinement and for the opinions of the Warden, Deputy Warden and others concerned. The case history is coordinated largely through conferences which are attended by the Commissioner of Correction, the Warden, the Director of the Division of Research and the members of the Personnel Department. This makes possible joint consideration of material, mutual criticism, and the working out of tentative programs in treatment. From time to time students and people engaged professionally in this and related fields attend the meetings by invitation.

When cases are to be considered for transfer, parole and, in some instances, pardon, the case history material is presented in summarized form, and reports on conduct and progress from the Warden,

Deputy Warden, shop officers and instructors are obtained. An interview is held with the inmate and his general attitudes and plans for the future are inquired into. The Board of Parole continually utilizes these summaries, and they are also referred to by the parole officers.

In the course of investigation many social problems are met with in the families concerned. A small sum is appropriated for immediate relief purposes. However it is the policy of the Department to refer the prisoners' relatives to proper welfare agencies and clinics in the different neighborhoods. The prisoners themselves also request social service in respect to their family problems. At the present time an average of about six requests a week are received from this source. The following list represents every tenth problem of fifty received between January 12, 1930, and March 18, 1931:

NAME	PROBLEM	ACTION TAKEN
"A"	Desired financial aid be given his crippled father.	Social worker visited local agency. Aid has been promised.
"B"	Complained that his family was in dire need.	Social worker visited home. Found wife receiving \$6 a week. Arranged that city double the allowance. Gave wife \$16 for cod liver oil and milk for the children.
"C"	Apprehensive concerning his wife's ability to support children because of imminence of discharge from employment due to business depression.	Wife's position found to be secure. Offered help if emergency should arise.
"D"	Wished increased allowance from the Overseers of the Poor.	No increase warranted.
"E"	Wife had not written.	Social worker induced wife to write and to visit when her financial condition permitted.

Medical Services

Medical examination and treatment are provided for every man. All serious illnesses are cared for, if necessary, by transfer to an outside general hospital, to the institution for tubercular cases, or to the institution for the infirm. The Wasserman test and anti-luetic treatment are routine. Many prisoners are suffering from minor disabilities, often of long standing, which interfere with social and personal efficiency. Limits of financial appropriation and other facilities do not make it practicable to do everything possible with this type of

problem. While the amount of restorative medical work has been increasing, much more could be done. The same difficulties and trends are discernible also in the dental situation.

Psychiatric examination is made of every admission. In addition, special examinations are made at the request of the administration by two psychiatrists (the State Prison psychiatrist and one from the State Department of Mental Diseases), and any certified as insane or mentally defective are transferred to a state hospital for the criminal insane. At present the psychiatric service is almost exclusively diagnostic.

Religion

Opportunity is given all inmates to satisfy their religious needs. There are two chaplains on the staff, and provision is made for the smaller denominational groups. Participation in the religious life of the institution is quite voluntary. Those who do not choose to go to church are subject to no discrimination. Services attract about one-half of the population, and a considerable number exercise the privilege of consultation with the chaplains.

SECTION II

AN EVALUATION OF THE FACTORS WHICH ARE CLAIMED TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE

Two features of present practice stand out. First, loss of liberty combined with submission to minimal routine requirements are more or less tacitly accepted as being the punishment as such. Second, many opportunities both for self-improvement and for ameliorating the stress of confinement are open to the prisoner with initiative or other resources needed to avail himself of them. For evidence of constructive effect one must look in the last analysis to cases in which the stress of confinement has been withstood without deterioration and observable progress has been made. The case of "A," while above the average, is not atypical of a group which has spent a long period in prison.

"A" has served over twenty years of a life sentence for murder in the second degree. Entering the prison as a laborer with but a few months' schooling in a foreign country, he has learned English, arithmetic, shorthand, typewriting, acquired some facility at portrait painting, as well as training for an occupation which he might take up upon release. He is alert mentally, courteous in manner, though in no way subdued.

He questions the interviewer as to the purpose of the conversation, making it clear, however, that he did not wish to appear inquisitive. He claims to feel somewhat nervous as a result of confinement and little-changing routine, but, on the whole, believes he has advanced. He accounts for his present degree of well-being in the following terms: "I don't let anything worry me; have buried myself in study; my faith in God is a great aid. Entertainment helps you liberate your feelings; movies take you around and bring new faces; there are women on the screen, that is natural. Visits, work, daily conversations keep you going, and reading the newspaper gives you the history of things."

"A" has maintained an effective, though indirect, contact with the outside world, and among other things, discusses intelligently the displacement of men by machines as a result of industrial development. He is preoccupied with the question of obtaining release. The crime itself and the sense of guilt do not appear to play a large part in his present mental functioning. He states that he has already paid too much for the crime. In interview one is struck by an over-desire to please and by the overwhelming strength of the motive of obtaining release. "A" could not be described as an unusually high type of character. For one thing, he is unduly self-centered. This does not mean, however, that he is not a desirable person to return to the community. "A" can be fairly described as a "good risk" both from the standpoints of being self-supporting and of avoiding further crime.

Several features of the prison could not be termed constructive. The facilities for eating, sleeping, exercise, and personal hygiene, while not inhumane, do not meet a desirable minimum. Punishments are essential to maintain institutional discipline and must have a certain severity to be effective, but the present method of punishment and segregation might well be revised in the light of psychological considerations. Then, too, the length of time spent alone in their rooms by inmates, particularly during week-ends and holidays, is probably greater than many of these individuals can sustain without a slowing-down or excessive introversion of general mental activity.

Factors that on the face of things are considered as constructive influences should not be passed by uncritically. The compass of this study does not permit that each organ of administration be subjected to properly detailed evaluation. We must be content to raise in passing a few leading critical issues. Facilities which are potentially constructive may, in the manner or extent of their use, be rendered ineffective or even harmful. Or again, a utility may be employed wisely but still far below the optimum. That which is constructive in one type of case may have the opposite effect in another. We

believe that, on the whole, the administration is making some genuine and successful effort to exert rehabilitative pressure and that many critics of the prison have neglected to make fair appraisal of the desirable influences which are and have been in operation.

In view of the fact that most of the inmates must eventually be returned to the community, the very limited attention devoted to determining social attitudes and prospects in the community is unfortunate. Notwithstanding the present lack of knowledge in matters directly bearing on the reeducation and testing of prison inmates, judgments are being made upon unnecessarily inadequate bases.

Whether we are concerned with shop organization or with schooling or with some form of direct persuasion, the sincerity and competence with which the service is carried out should be such that the respect of the better element among the inmates is deservedly earned. While much good work is being done in a number of instances, effectiveness is being lost because such respect is not more commonly earned. We do not apply a perfectionist measure and do not expect from the prison officer standards which are not achieved from day to day in the outside school, factory and hospital. Rather do we pass comment temperately upon such weaknesses as are lessening somewhat the quantity of effective constructive influences.

Without a doubt a judicious amount of routine is a proper component of the disciplinary program. The social histories of a large group of the inmates point to disordered ways of living, irregular habits of work, wandering, alcoholism, and harmful use of leisure. Hence the need for routine. Furthermore, some routine and discipline are necessary as a basis for other constructive procedures. Rigidity in excess, however, may interfere with the development of initiative, self-discipline, and other qualities no less desirable than is the acceptance of routine.

At the institution in question it is felt by the writers that in a large number of instances a more rigid program of cleanliness, orderliness, and truly active respect for authority might well be put into effect. Such a program will be increasingly appropriate because of the fact that the more hopeful rehabilitative prospects, i. e., those showing a higher degree of initiative and social discipline, are being transferred, or are being considered for transfer, to the new and less rigid institution at Norfolk. With the exception of the "key" men holding responsible positions in the institution in question, the remainder of the group (excluding new admissions awaiting classification) will soon be those individuals who are either primarily custodial

cases or cases which seem to require an almost military regime in order to be trained in social discipline.

Visits, letters, newspapers and movies are privileges which diminish the deteriorating effects of imprisonment, although they occasionally introduce detrimental influences. For example, an inmate's relatives may be undesirable characters or some newspaper articles harmful. Life in an institution of this kind tends to become in a sense ingrown and social alienation is a real hazard. If rehabilitation is to be a seriously sought-after objective, we must guard against releasing an individual who knows and feels himself to belong to a prison and to whom persons, not officials or fellow-inmates, are somewhat strange and remote. Particularly is this so in a penal system which uses the method of fairly prolonged segregation in a large percentage of cases. Because of their effect upon inmate morale and their preservative influence upon the personality, it is believed that the advantages of the above-named outside contacts far outweigh the dangers.

A prolonged period of observation in the institution reveals a wide diversity in the daily lives of the inmates. Often this diversity is more permitted than actively fostered. There is a considerable component of what the Gluecks, in reference to a similar institution, have called "cafeteria penology."⁷ This concept emphasizes a negative factor; namely, undue dependence upon inmate initiative. The criticism implied may fairly be directed to the arrangements at State Prison for the constructive use of leisure time. Systematically considered treatment policy is confined to enforcing minimal standards of observance to regime, discipline and courtesy, personal hygiene, work, and elementary schooling. There is a great deal of testing and treatment of a relatively unformalized kind, but treatment and testing do not rank with security and industrial production in the functioning of the prison organization.

This institution is flexible in structure and is more rich and varied in content than is imagined by many critics. There are many responsible duties both on the maintenance side and in the industries which prisoners in such a system are relied upon to perform. Penologists have stressed the need for classification and individualization. For its immediate practical purposes the administration is compelled to test and to classify, and to appeal to loyalty and cooperation. Considering the daily lives of many of the inmates, there is already much

⁷Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor T. "500 Criminal Careers," 1930, Alfred A. Knopf, New York. Page 324.

intelligent individualization. Generally, however, this is not done with all possible effectiveness nor is its long-period educational purpose adequately stressed. Furthermore, the reasons for particular decisions are not placed on record and the outcome of experiments is neither frequently nor carefully appraised.

However, some practical difficulties of the situation should be considered. The prison has to deal with much dangerous and intractable material. There is probably a fair percentage of cases in which the autopsy stage has been reached. Very little is yet known about "treatment" for criminal behavior. Then, too, the lack of suitably trained personnel limits some changes that are desirable. Furthermore, material resources and opportunities are limited both within the Department of Correction itself and, particularly during the economic depression, in the communities to which attempt is made to adjust these men.

SECTION III

HOW MAY CONSTRUCTIVE INFLUENCES BE DEVELOPED

Some possibilities of growth within the structure of this essentially conventional American prison will be discussed under four headings. A) Conventional procedures should be carried out more effectively. B) There should be greater planfulness and more record keeping. C) Social and historical perspective is particularly important in this field. D) The composition of treatment should be varied on a scientific basis.

A) Treatment may be improved by study, criticism and development of the conventionally recognized reforming devices. None of those that we have here and now can be said to be operating near their optimum of effectiveness, even when the difficulties inherent in a prison situation are allowed for. Rising standards of penal administration mean better schools, better trade training, better medical treatment, an improved example to the inmates on the part of the officers, as well as the introduction of new ways, direct and indirect, of socializing and of curing personality defects, and also better methods of recognizing relatively unsalvageable material. Discussion of the workings of the school and library, which are of first importance among such devices, will serve to illustrate our point. Other observers might similarly have chosen religious services, discipline, or trade training for illustrative criticism.

As at present conducted the school follows curricula and methods similar to those of the public elementary school for children. Little or no systematic attention has been given to the special problem presented by the illiterate or poorly educated adult. It is also significant that the inmates who do the actual teaching receive almost no formal instruction in the art of teaching. The needs of the prisoners with little schooling make the question of educational content particularly important. For them education has less of a formal purpose than in the case of the child and more of an immediate practical purpose. These men require to learn how to conduct their social and personal relationships intelligently, prudently, and with satisfaction. They have to write letters, to apply effectively for employment, to use social agencies and clinics, and to manage their usually slender resources economically. Since reading is important in the institution and can be helpful in the use of leisure upon release, they need to learn to gain satisfaction from books, magazines and newspapers. Some men prefer to study in their rooms rather than attend classes. No provision is made for directing the efforts of such individuals unless definite courses are undertaken. The introduction of correspondence courses by the University Extension Service is a progressive measure. As yet, however, adequate investigation is not made of the applicant's ability to benefit by such education. While some good and effective work is done by the school, we find great need for improvement in routine matters as well as for inspiration from the broader notions of adult education. In view of the fact that a large part of the population consists of young men untrained and unhabituated to work, the situation in respect to formal vocational training speaks for itself.

Without attempting to measure by perfectionist standards, a number of similar criticisms may be raised concerning the library. In the selection of books the prisoner is left largely to his own initiative and to the questionable advice of assistant inmate-librarians. As might be expected in such circumstances, many read without purpose or system, and little pressure is exerted to induce them to do otherwise. There is no efficient system for recording the reading done by inmates or for evaluating their efforts along this line in considering fitness for release.

Not only is there need for further development of such services as the school and library but also the question of their proper integration should be taken into account. Both may be used in reconditioning fundamental life attitudes and goals. These resources may be

instrumental to the purposes of the Warden, Chaplain, Psychiatrist, social workers and other staff members. For example, many biographies portray lives spent usefully and happily despite serious handicap. When an individual has become oppressed by the sense of confinement, books on travel may provide satisfactory vicarious experience. Philosophy, religion, and poetry are comforting to some during depressions. Furthermore, the library and the school can be made strategic points through which the student of criminology may make contact with the prisoners.

B) Experiments in treatment should be made more consciously and planfully and should be recorded. An importance equal to that of security and shop production should be attached to the motive of treatment. This implies organized and controlled use of what we believe to be instruments of treatment.

Many administrative acts, such as shop placement and granting of privileges, have a bearing on treatment. Often this is not realized by the inmate or administrator. The former is inclined to think of privileges only as ways of easing the stresses of his confinement. The attitude of mind toward the granting or receiving of a privilege is no less important than the material changes that are brought about. For example, in the state hospitals the concept "occupational therapy" has given a new meaning and purpose to the employment of patients. Similarly many of the treatment measures now being carried out in the prison can be given a new meaning and purpose when they are made part of a planned and controlled policy to improve and to test behavior. At the present time there is, as we have indicated, a great deal of intelligent individualization. While the treatment purpose of this is often more than implicit in the mind of the administrator, it is rarely recognized and expressed in terms of a treatment policy for the organization. The inmate is not brought to regard it as such, and something intangible, but very real, is thereby lost. It would be a foolish extreme to make the inmate ever-conscious of having his behavior reconstructed. The capacity of individuals for a helpful self-consciousness varies greatly. Since, however, reconstruction is a leading purpose in this situation, consciousness of rehabilitation as a general aim of the organization⁸ and of the opportunities and the tests instrumental thereto, can be helpful in the same way that awareness of what "fitness" means is an aid to the athlete and to the team. There is need of a greater pressure towards personal reconstruction

⁸The Western Electric Company is making a planful, effective effort to interpret the policy of the administration to its staff.

which can be exerted by regime, incentives, suggestion, and persuasion. From the administrative standpoint, the place of the treatment motive in the formally stated policy affects somewhat its emphasis in the actual policy. Developmental or testing plans, for example, placing an individual in a clerk's position or as key man in a shop, are often frank experiments. Experiments are best conducted when carried out with the greatest awareness of conditions and when careful record is kept of progress and outcome, followed by some attempt at interpretation. Until a great deal more is done in both these directions, the institution will not be accepted either by the staff as a whole or by inmates, as a number of reasonably integrated treatment situations capable of exerting a healthy pressure upon, as well as testing, deviate characters. Words are too often substitutes for action. Clear thinking and systematic statement while only part of the equipment of a good program are virtually essential to effective policy. Care must be taken, however, lest a progressive program result in attention to spectacular cases while the great body of inmates and the elementals of reeducation are neglected.

At present little effort is being made towards systematic understanding or presentation of all this institution has to offer its inmates. The use of available facilities is far below the optimum, and the most obvious way in which this appears is that from the rehabilitative point of view many inmates are being virtually lost sight of. If penal administration and criminology are to become scientific, there has to be developed a body of principles and theories based upon carefully recorded observation and experiment, and acceptable for practical working purposes.

C) In view of the complexity and unusual difficulties of his tasks the penal administrator has need of a broad historic and social perspective.

There are few, if any, direct techniques at present available in correctional treatment. We are not even conscious of definite goals. Individuals have to be prepared to reenter social situations that fall far short of providing the conditions of a full life. Inmates tend to underrate unduly the facilities which the institution provides to reform them and exaggerate the difficulties of the rôle they are expected to play upon reentering society.

Conscious of his failures, seeing few of the cases that have a markedly successful outcome, the prison administrator has to continue using the conventionally accepted devices. When some new approach is suggested, for example, that of psychiatry, there is a

temptation to expect complete solution of crime through it or, at the other extreme, to disregard it because of certain limitations. Instead, psychiatry and psychology can be regarded as improved tools with a few direct uses and some interesting possibilities well worth exploring.

How can a proper faith be sustained in view of such circumstances as these? An historic perspective is part of the answer. How can history, ideals, and present actualities be properly integrated? Social perspective is one of the essentials to this end. The point of view of administrator and prisoner acquires a certain objectivity when each views the situation comparatively and historically. For example, critics both without and within the prison argue that confinement in conditions such as these is barbarous. While some of the particular criticisms may be well founded, the extremes of criticisms and resistance are reduced when administrative policy as a whole reflects appreciation of the prison's part as a regulator in the social structure, of the limitations and difficulties in the lives of many non-delinquent citizens, and of the historical development of penal treatment. The following is suggested as the kind of historical perspective that might meet this need.

Present policy cannot be said to represent any one penal theory. It is eclectic and on the whole unconsciously so. Components of present policy may be traced to historical experiments and theories in the treatment of crime and to current developments in the related fields of social case work, medicine, and education. In the first place, there is a period of penal deprivation, which may be considered as punishment, determined by the seriousness of the offense committed, this representing the chief feature of the Classical School. Secondly, there is confinement to make possible reflection and penitence, this being the principal motive of the Pennsylvania system. Thirdly, there is segregation, under which turbulent spirits are enabled to mature⁹ without injuring the community and themselves in the process. This illustrates the theory of social protection. Fourthly, there is regular employment under shop conditions which are comparable with those of ordinary industry. This was a major contribution of the Auburn system. Fifthly, elementary schooling is furnished the illiterate and the poorly educated. Higher education¹⁰ for those desirous

⁹The maturation factor is possibly more important than has previously been believed. Statistical research shows that crime, particularly predatory crime, is largely a preoccupation of adolescents and young men. This is true of the State Prison group. Loveland, Frank: "A Statistical Analysis of the Inmate Population of the Mass. State Prison on September 30, 1929."

¹⁰The bearings of adult education as it has been interpreted in terms of

and capable of benefiting from it and, to a limited extent, formal trade training are provided. Closely related in purpose are the library and recreational facilities. Educational and vocational training were major features of the reformatory plan developed at Elmira. Sixthly, visits by relatives and friends are encouraged; newspapers, baseball games, occasional moving pictures, theatricals, and musical entertainments are permitted. Contemporary writers emphasize that most prisoners are to be eventually returned to the community and, therefore, should not be socially alienated by complete isolation from normal interests and enjoyments. Seventh, religious services and contacts with clergy in most penological systems have played an important part as cathartic, ameliorative, and reformatory influences. Eighth, social histories and personality studies, psychiatric and medical examinations are made and are being used increasingly for various administrative purposes. This is in conformity with the modern principle of individualization. The influence of medicine here shows itself in the emphasis now being laid upon diagnosis. However, it is being increasingly realized that diagnosis, treatment, and experiment are interdependent. Historically, Lombroso was among the first to place the emphasis upon the characteristics of the individual criminal rather than upon the crime, and the use and extension of the case history method has received its chief impetus from the behavior clinics. Ninth, transfer to open camps and to less rigid institutions operate as major incentives and even more important in this respect is the earning of parole and commutation. These embody the principles worked out by Crofton and Maconochie which underlie modern systems of classification and parole.

D) Progress in penology implies not only better administered schools and shops, the introduction of new technical devices, greater planfulness of treatment, and appreciation of historic and comparative conditions, but also controlled experimental variation of the quantities of components in prison policy. It is a question whether the particular functions of policy can be regarded as combining to make up one clear-cut and systematic whole. At present, it seems that any such representation of policy in schematic form would be artificial and over-simplified. An alternative is to list some of the

the inmate's needs by MacCormick¹¹ has scarcely yet entered the thinking of penologists here or elsewhere. Heretofore, more hope has been placed upon the possibility of structural changes which were to be brought about by discipline, habit-training and religion, rather than upon the possibilities of introducing a rich social and educational content which, if selected to meet individual needs, may more readily produce corrective structural changes.

important motives, values, and regulative ideas, such as security, punitive deprivation, the opportunity for exercising initiative, the use of incentives (both rewards and punishments), education and discipline, allowing maturation of character to occur under conditions which are economical socially and as little harmful as possible to the individual, testing the progress of treatment. Then, too, the relation between these various motives has to be considered in terms of the needs of the institution as a whole, those of distinctive groups and those of individuals. A balance must be established among the various elements of treatment and between the emphasis upon regime and upon individualization.

Let us refer to instances in which the quantities of various treatment components might be altered with advantage. According to present policy the constructive use of leisure time is left very largely to the initiative of the inmate, although admittedly a great many ways are open to him by which to seek opportunities appropriate to his abilities and interests. So important is the use of leisure time that we believe more pressure towards its effective use should be exerted by the institution. It might be made the condition of earning certain privileges. It might be given more formal recognition in evaluating the relative claims for transfer and parole. Too little place is given to the incentive component. The fact that the institution store furnishes a list of luxuries available to the inmates able to pay for them justifies the criticism being made that by such increases of the ameliorative component a too great departure from traditional prison policy has been made.

Differentiation of treatment should be extended, but as far as possible the reasonableness of what is proposed should be made clear, for it is no easy matter to extend such differentiation without awakening a sense of injustice among inmates. There are several changes which might be aimed to meet the needs of distinctive groups and of individuals. For example, there are some types that live a too passive life within the regime. To the individual lacking in initiative the institution with its regular meals and shelter, the relative freedom from having to make decisions and to arrange troublesome details gives a certain sense of security which is in striking contrast with the insecurity of the homeless unemployed man on a city street.

Punishment may interfere with the rehabilitative process, and alone it is clearly no cure for the problem of crime. Nevertheless, this is not a reason for believing that deprivation as such has not still

an important place in the treatment scheme. There are cases in which a greater amount of this component would seem likely to act as a stimulant. Special incentives, both positive and negative, are required to brace individuals of this type. In another type of case the frequently recurring manifestation of unstable patterns of behavior points to need for considerable period of maturation. With this type one aspect of treatment lies in waiting sufficiently long for this inner organization of character to take place.

In every instance there are some individual needs. Many of these are met by the day to day administrative decisions. There are many, however, which call for a special plan. The following case is illustrative. "D" is one of the most capable and cooperative individuals in the institution and has developed himself markedly in several respects. However, a report¹¹ from a state hospital concerning his traits during adolescence—his behavior disorder was not traced to any of the recognized psychoses—gives ground for apprehension as to whether his favorable adjustment to this relatively rigid institution is a good index to his behavior in society:

"But the impulse to do wrong was overpowering, and he stated that when he did wrong he usually did so heedlessly and without consideration until the act was done, when it seems, he always felt remorse and repentance and a sincere desire, for a while at least, to repair or make good in whatever way lay in his power."

With an individual of this type a number of deliberately planned testing situations appear to be essential to an intelligent decision concerning release.

In conclusion, we have in some measure attempted to redefine the present forms and potentialities for rehabilitation at a prison that is in most respects conventional and have attempted to stress the need for more effective use of available techniques and the value of having objectives and basic principles more clearly in mind. Likewise, the need for new emphases and new techniques is obvious. Much constructive thinking and planning are required if the prison administrator is to be given a fair opportunity to place treatment and testing on a level of importance in the organization equal to that of security and production.

¹¹"The Education of Adult Prisoners," Austin H. MacCormick, New York, The National Society of Penal Information, 1931.