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PARASITES BY COMPULSION

A parasite is an animal or plant which lives in, or on, or at any rate at the expense of another without giving an equivalent for what it gets. The subject is an enormous one and volumes could be written upon it. There are all degrees of parasitism, and parasites range from single celled animalcules and microbes up to the man or woman who lives by the sweat of other people's brows or on the accumulated wealth of ancestors, without rendering an approximately equal service to society in return. The tapeworm is a parasite; so also is the gambler or the liquor dealer; so also is the member of that class known as the "idle rich."

Very closely related to parasitism is the phenomenon of degeneration. Degeneration is a phenomenon which in the material world of life consists in simplification of structure and function, in the loss or atrophy of such organs as are no longer needed. The term is not to be applied in those cases where there is specialization, where certain powers are developed at the expense of others; it applies rather where there is loss in one direction without an equivalent gain in another. The tapeworm is degenerate, because, since it is bathed in a nutritive and previously digested fluid, it has lost the power of digesting for itself, and the organs necessary thereto. There are parasitic organisms which in their infancy are fairly complex and well developed, but which ultimately lose everything but generative organs, with a microscopic body attached. The ancestors of these beings were fairly respectable in their way; they degenerated because they had too easy a time of it; they settled down where they could live without taking the trouble to work for it. Nature makes short work of useless organs; it toils for ages in building up complicated and highly evolved beings, and quite ruthlessly forces them back when they do not make use of the powers given them. And what is true of physical organs and functions is equally true of mental powers. Deprive a man of the opportunity of using his mind, or let him neglect it himself, and away it goes, like the tapeworm's stomach. There are men who have lost the power of self-support and in fact everything but re-

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production, because their parents were wealthy; they have become degenerated parasites. Ease and degeneracy go hand in hand.

Man usually possesses an instinctive tendency to activity, thus counteracting the tendency to degeneration. When not forced to engage in productive employment, he occupies himself with the unproductive — hence athletics, hence the innumerable games and sports which require some physical or mental effort directed to no useful end. While thinking that he is amusing himself he is really fighting off degeneracy. It is said that Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do. Blessed be Satan, for apart from its effect on others, and so far as the individual is concerned, it is by far better to be engaged in many kinds of mischief than to be idle. If all of the people in the world who are engaged in mischief should cease and simply do nothing, our asylums would soon be crowded with idiots and lunatics, the victims of degeneracy. Just as long as man does not know what to do, Satan puts him at work on something, which however bad relatively, is better than nothing. Do not take this as a defense of crime; it is simply a way of saying that evil is often a lesser good, a proposition which even some clergymen have been known to defend.

To be a parasite, then, means to run a grave risk of degeneracy. Parasites are of two kinds, parasites by choice and parasites by compulsion. The responsibility for parasites by choice rests largely on themselves; for those by compulsion it rests on those who compel them. The practical result is the same. Whether a man adopts the "easier way" of his own free will, or whether it is forced on him by others because it is easier for them also, the end is degeneracy. It is quite common to look on the professional criminal as a parasite on the community, and doubtless this view is correct, in as far as he lives off it and renders no service in return. Lack of education, of favorable influences, often makes him a parasite by compulsion rather than by choice, an excuse which cannot be made in the case of those respectable parasites who gain their ends in a "legitimate" way, who use their intelligence in transferring the property of others to their own account, and who frame the laws so as to enable them to do it.

Under parasites by compulsion I have in mind chiefly those persons who are sent to prison and compelled to remain in more or less pronounced idleness at public expense. You may say that the public has a perfect right to maintain its prisoners in idleness if it chooses to foot the bill. In one sense it has, but there is a reason why it has no right to do it. This is, that it is subjecting them to the degeneracy which is the almost inevitable result of such parasitism. The free, active criminal may and generally does occupy himself in a way which keeps him from general degeneracy, but to shut him up and at the same time deprive him of those occupations which prevent degeneracy, that is a crime committed

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against the criminal. And society pays for this, too, in recidivism as well as board bills. It keeps men in prison for years under conditions which discourage or prevent all initiative; it enforces obedience to rules, often reasonable, often without real justification, but it does not teach the man to think and act for himself. It encourages mental stagnation by placing all sorts of useless restrictions on the writing of letters, or the receipt of literature, and then, when it has made him a victim of forced degeneracy through inaction, it turns him out to shift for himself and howls about confirmed criminal tendencies when he is unable to support himself honestly and goes back to the only trade he ever knew, that of preying upon others.

That some men love idleness cannot be denied, but laziness is a pathological condition, frequently due to physical weakness, malnutrition, disease. The normal man is not lazy, be he criminal or not. One of my friends, a gentleman of keen observing powers, who had the opportunity of spending sixteen months in the United States Penitentiary at Atlanta, writes me as follows:

I have read your last article on Prison Labor and Slave Labor with interest and agree with you from beginning to end in theory, but I would have hesitated about attacking the practice of working prisoners gratuitously, for they might a great deal better work for nothing than not work at all.

In the Atlanta prison and in all prisons except those where they have contract labor, there is not sufficient work for the inmates and every good, strong, able-bodied man in Atlanta would have welcomed the opportunity to go out and work on the roads in the free air for nothing. They would have been glad to work at any trade for the sake of learning it. It was pitiful to see the anxiety of the men to get into the orchestra, for they thought they would get a musical education and could support themselves when they went out. The stone shed where the building stone is prepared is the hardest place to work in the institution, where all the worst men are sent for infractions of the rules, but some men were glad to get even that job, for they thought they could work at stone cutting after they left the prison. It is important, not only that they be given work, but that it shall be of a kind which will enable them to support themselves when they leave.

Some day the prisoner will be treated like a free working man. The Government will give him his board, clothes and lodging, charging him the full cost thereof, and he will be paid at market rates for his labor, deduction being made for the above indicated expenses.

I have seldom seen a higher tribute to the innate goodness of the convict. He struggles against enforced degeneracy as a man struggles against suffocation. The universal cry of the prisoner is for something to do, something to read, somebody to write to, anything to keep the mind working, to prevent mental and physical degeneration. The introduction of amusements, especially those of an athletic character, into prisons, is a most beneficent move. Sooner or later prison authorities will wake up to the fact that restricting the correspondence of inmates with the outer world, further than may be absolutely needful to preserve discipline, is not only harmful to the men, but is a distinctly criminal act, because

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it withholds that mental exercise which is needed to prevent the man from lapsing into a degenerate condition. We are gradually coming to believe that we have no right to commit legal murder under the name of capital punishment; we shall also in time come to recognize that no matter how bad the prisoner may be we have no right to deprive him of whatever manhood he has, but on the contrary must nurse it as we would a sick or weak child into perfect health and strength. Whatever may be said of the protection of society, society is not protecting itself by stunting the soul; whatever may be said in justification of punishment as such, nothing can justify destroying the manhood of him whom we have in our power, and whom, probably, we expect to set at liberty.

Notice to Prison Members

It is always assumed, unless otherwise stated, that prisoners who apply for enrollment as LEAGUE members, desire to be provided with correspondents. It is not required, but it is helpful to us and of advantage to the applicant, if he writes a personal letter to the Editor, stating his desires and interests, with whatever other information he wants to give. This letter not only helps us in selecting a suitable correspondent, but serves as an introduction to the correspondent as well. All communications are absolutely confidential.

Prison members are earnestly urged to interest their fellow inmates in the LEAGUE. Application blanks are not necessary, but we desire assurance that the request is made by the applicant, or with his consent.

If the correspondent assigned does not write within a reasonable time, it should be reported, and other arrangements will be made.

It is most inconsiderate and discourteous not to reply to a letter received from a correspondent at the earliest possible opportunity. No one is expected to continue indefinitely an uninteresting correspondence, but if it is not satisfactory, it should be reported to this office. Those who simply ignore their correspondents and who give no explanation for so doing are suspended from membership until a satisfactory excuse is received.

Prisoners leaving the institution should report to this office, in order that the CRITIC—which is a source of expense—may be discontinued.

Mailing The Critic

The CRITIC cannot be mailed without envelopes. A kind friend, who values the CRITIC because he has been in prison himself, recently came forward and paid the bill for our last order of 50,000.

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These have to be ordered in large amounts to save cost, and when so ordered they cost $1.28 per thousand. A new order of this size is now due. Who will step forward and help us with it?

Letter From a Prisoner

The prisoner whose letter is quoted below is one of my favorites. I have known him for three years; it is the first time he has mentioned his personal troubles, and he has always been ready to lend a hand to others, when he could.—*Editor.*

. . . Being a consumptive, I have been receiving eggs and milk since 1912 up till recently, when somebody falsely accused me of selling eggs. As a result, not only the eggs but the milk are held back from me. I suppose you will not believe that a consumptive would sell the eggs on which he relies for sustaining his health. Meanwhile I am relieved chiefly by condensed milk which is bought out of my scanty means. If you can grant me a little relief from the funds in your hand devoted to charity, I shall be much obliged to you, and when I can make some money out of beadwork, I shall send you contributions for the same purpose for the benefit of others. . . . Considering the circumstances bearing on my case, I do not deserve the heavy sentence (15 years), which I am doing. Nothing can save me except a strong public opinion. . . .

Yours sincerely,

L——

Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 54 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: Atlanta, Georgia, U. S. Penitentiary, 5; California, Folsom, 14; California, San Quentin, 5; Leavenworth, Kansas, U. S. Penitentiary, 8; Maine, 10; Missouri, 1; Montana, 4; Oklahoma, 1; Oregon, 1; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary, 4; Vermont, 1.

Those who would like to help these men by correspondence are invited to offer their services to the LEAGUE, and are recommended to state, if they desire, whether they have any special knowledge or qualifications as teachers or otherwise which can be used to advantage. Many of these prisoners have not a friend in the world. There is a considerable demand for help in English, elementary or advanced, and in the study of law; we have also requests for agriculture, botany, medical botany, Spanish, navigation, mechanical engineering.

All volunteers are expected to enroll as members of the LEAGUE. All prisoners who are assigned correspondents are LEAGUE members, and positively no names of prisoners will be given except to members. All names are confidential.

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Membership in The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired. No pledges or other obligations.

Special Request

The entire edition of the CRITIC of July 14th, containing the article *Prison Labor and Slave Labor,* is exhausted. As we have a request for a considerable number of this issue for propaganda purposes, if any of our friends who have this issue and can spare it, would send it to this office, it would be hugely appreciated. The sooner the better.

A Good Reason For Buying Books From Us

As an accommodation to purchasers, theosophical, occult and new thought books *which have been bought from us* and which the purchaser does not wish to keep will in general be taken back on a rental basis, *provided they are on our rental lists;* that is, the purchaser will be credited with the full amount paid, less the rental charges for the time they have been kept, and this credit may be used for buying or renting other books. This does not apply to books bought elsewhere, nor to books not on our rental lists. Other rental books may be taken back on the same terms.

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Every Subscription to the CRITIC helps to send a free copy to a prisoner.

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(Subject to change without notice)

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PRISON REFORM AND SENTIMENTALITY

The term "maudlin sentimentality" is one in common use by the opponents of prison reform, to which the San Francisco *Chronicle* has just added two more, to wit, "unspeakable mushiness" and "slobbering." Whether the coiners of opprobrious epithets will be able to force the English language further remains to be seen. At the same time, the use of these somewhat unpleasant terms is encouraging. It can usually be assumed that those who resort to calling names are at their wits' end for arguments.

The root of sentimentality is altruism, it is love, it is the desire to do to others as you would be done by, it is the Golden Rule, and besides, in most cases it is sound common sense. Every step forward which man has made, other than in the ways and means of self-aggrandizement and personal gratification, has been due to sentimentality in one form or another, and has at one time been open to the charge of being maudlin. In the opinion of His contemporaries Christ was a notorious "slobberer" when He preferred the company of publicans and sinners to that of the Pharisees, and when He commended those who visited the prisoners and ministered unto them. Laws bettering the sanitary conditions in factories, or preventing the grinding out of the lives of young children by hard labor, laws preventing the adulteration of food, the poisoning of the community by alcohol, laws against sweatshops, or providing for safety against fire, in fact, every effort which has been made to protect the helpless against the strong and selfish, all have been open to the same charge. Once petty larceny was punished by death; that it is no longer so is due to sentiment which at the time was maudlin. I might add that most of the great inventions and scientific discoveries have been due to men who in their day were looked on by their "practical" contemporaries as visionaries and cranks. Let us not forget Langley and his "flying machine." The editor of the *Chronicle* is merely barking as all dogs have barked before.

How are we to judge whether the accusation of exaggerated sentimentality is justified or not? Certainly not because some editor or newspaper hack chooses to call it so. As Shakespeare said

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of mercy, so it may be said of sentiment, "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." We laugh at many manifestations of sentimentality which seem foolish, but which have a deep meaning. The solicitude of the old lady for her pet poll parrot may amuse the thoughtless, but it is as noble as the love of the mother for her child; it is the manifestation of the force which alone makes life possible. Such sentimentality may or may not be good for the parrot, but it at least blesses the old lady and ennobles her. And that is true of the sentimentality manifested towards the prisoner. No matter how exaggerated it may be, it blesses him who shows it, and it can be condemned only when positive proof is forthcoming that harm is wrought to the prisoner himself.

I have not the least intention of denying that such harm may be done. Just as you can ruin yourself, your child, your husband, your wife, by undue indulgence, so you can spoil the prisoner. It is a fault of all living beings to be susceptible of being spoiled. You can make him feel that he is being unjustly treated and that the debt is all on the side of society to him; you can treat him so that he will be discontented with the world as he must find it on his release; you can make him a parasite here and hereafter.

There is but little danger that this will happen, because as a rule such efforts do not bring about the results demanded. You ask for an appropriation of a thousand and you get a hundred: you demand purple and fine linen and feather beds for the convict, and your efforts result in decent clothes and clean bedding; you insist on roast beef and ice cream, and the result is a better quality of pork and beans. There is therefore very little reason for getting heated over the matter.

After all, the question of how far prisoners shall be treated like human beings, which they are, not as beasts, which they are not, is a very practical one. It must be based on these points. Here are men who have been sentenced to segregation for a longer or shorter period. Some day most of them must be set at liberty. The old idea of punishment was based on retaliation, on revenge —an eye for an eye—a sentiment belonging only to the smallest souls. Simply to get back at the offender, for the sake of making him suffer, is puerile. His isolation must have two reasons; one, the protection of society against depredation, the other, and equally important, giving him the chance to prepare himself for freedom. Society can never be protected by brutalizing the convict through suppressing such impulses as are normal and justifiable in the free man, or by housing and feeding him so that his health suffers. The entire question of prison treatment is one of efficiency; no rule should be made which does not have this distinctly in view, efficiency while an inmate and efficiency after liberation. That many or most inmates of prisons are abnormal morally or mentally, supposing it to be admitted, makes no difference whatever so far as the

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question of efficiency is concerned. Supposing a man to be a bad lot, it means just this, that so much the more effort must be made, and the neglect of it is not only to his detriment but to that of society. It is said that forty per cent of discharged prisoners find their way back to prison, and this is often used as an argument that the convict is presumably a dangerous character. In reality it means only one thing, that our present methods are defective. Statistics are urgently needed with regard to recidivism which will embrace a comprehensive analysis of its causes. It means little to say that so many percent are for burglary, so many for acts of violence, etc. It must be shown why the burglary was committed, why the assault took place. Was the theft because the offender preferred stealing, or was it because he could not find work, or had not been taught to work, or because imprisonment had caused him to forget whatever trade he once knew? Such an analysis would form a surprising commentary on our prison methods which are so satisfying to the slang throwers.

Much of the outcry against recent prison methods has been directed against allowing the prisoner to have amusements, athletic or otherwise, in short, against his having a "good time." Now, we might as well admit that what is good for the free man is good also for the prisoner. If the hard working free man finds that playing golf, or seeing the baseball game, or listening to music, or viewing the movies, refreshes him for his labors of the coming day, the same must be true of the prisoner—the efficiency is increased in both cases. The mere fact of his having violated some law makes no essential difference.

I would suggest this test by which we may determine whether the treatment of prisoners is "maudlin sentimentality" or sound common sense. Whatever is unquestionably good for the free man, whether in the way of food, lodging or amusement, whatever really renders him more efficient in his work, sounder in mind and body, is good also for the prisoner and should be given to him as far as circumstances will permit. Whatever uplifts and elevates the free man, inspires him with good ideals, widens his perspective, should as far as possible be allowed to the prisoner. Friends, good books, music, sports, interest in current events, all should be allowed to him, and for this reason restriction of letter writing and the receipt of literature are unjustifiable. On the contrary, those things which the free man does not really need, and which can be dispensed with without his being in any way the worse, which are mere luxuries or useless habits, these the prisoner can also dispense with without harm. As I believe in the simple life for the free man, so I do for the prisoner, no more, no less. There is a vast amount of accumulated information on the subject of soldiers' rations which has been scientifically worked out from the standpoint of efficiency and which could well be utilized in the feeding of prisoners. And above all,

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just as friendly intercourse and sympathy are good for the free man, just as they tend to cultivate the social instinct which, more than all law, is the best deterrent of crime, so they should be encouraged for the prisoner, and for this reason, if for no other, we should beware how we brand with opprobrious epithets the interest which the free individual is disposed to manifest towards the convict, individually or collectively.

While I fully believe in paying the prisoner the full value of his labor, less cost of maintenance, I think the ways in which his earnings are spent should be carefully controlled. If the prison is a place of discipline, it should not be allowed to be a place where self-indulgence may be allowed to run riot. I know of one prison where men who can afford it are allowed to order meals from down-town. It is wrong. Special privileges to those with more money, unless it be a question of efficiency, do not go well with discipline.

From a Prisoner's Letter

Dear Dr. Stokes: August 15th, 1915.

. . . I ain't got no place to write and no one that will answer my letters if I did write, for the letter you wrote me is the first letter I have received in over two years, and I guess I was the most cheerful boy in prison when I did receive your welcome letter, and I couldn't hardly believe myself that I did get a letter, and you don't know how it cheers a young man up to get a letter in here, when he ain't had a letter in two years. . . .

H——— M———

Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 45 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: Atlanta, Georgia, U. S. Penitentiary, 7; California, Folsom, 11; California, San Quentin, 3; Leavenworth, Kansas, U. S. Penitentiary, 9; Maine, 5; Montana, 2; Oklahoma, 1; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary, 5; New York, Women's Prison, 1; Vermont, 1.

Besides, we have a number who have been disappointed by members who promised to write and have not done so.

Wanted—Correspondents

For a young prisoner—one who is a baseball enthusiast, and interested in woodcraft, outing, etc.

For a Montenegrin prisoner—One who can write the Montenegrin or Serb language. Applicant understands no other.

For negroes—Those who have no race prejudice. Negro prisoners, while usually not well educated, make very faithful and appreciative correspondents.

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———?———?———?

Dear Friend:

"Procrastination is the thief of Time." Some one has branded him (or her) all right, but no one has gone far enough to pass sentence on that same rascal Procrastination, whose sin is OMISSION —and yet, you know, he's responsible for a big bunch of trouble. In fact, he's one of the biggest Directors in the concern of F. A. I. Lure & Co., Unlimited—in the Land of Manana (Mex. for "Do it Tomorrow").

Would you like the job of judging the "Sins of Commission and the Sins of Omission?"

Now, we know that you are not a steady dweller in the Land of Manana—we know you are an active, wide-awake worker in the Vineyard of Today—

But, how are we going to explain this to the hard-pressed fellow who struggles with the bills of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE, trying to meet current expenses with the scanty contents of the cash box of our LEAGUE? *He says* he hasn't received your contribution —nor an expression from you about it! We know you want to do your part to keep up the earnest work of the LEAGUE—but the fellow mentioned above doesn't seem convinced—really, he tells by the feel of the silver in his fingers—

Frankly, friend, we're embarrassed. The writer's afraid your foot slipped—or is slipping towards the border of Manana, and Manana pays no dividends—doesn't even buy bones for the office cat down our way.

We DO need your help—anything from the dimes to the big round dollars. Do we get something by return mail?

And also, can you suggest some modest little reminder that you'd like best—so you won't forget once a month, to send us a regular amount to carry on our work? Our supply of postage stamps is getting mighty low—have mercy on us—we might be tempted to write again if we do not hear from you—because we feel you really want to help, and—well, we repeat, "Beware of Manana!"

Hopefully, with a kindly intent,

THE EDITOR.

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Theosophy, published monthly by the United Lodge of Theosophists, contains reprints of articles by H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge and others, no longer accessible. $2.00 a year; samples, 25 cents.

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Both through the O. E. Library.

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Special Attention of Prison Correspondents

We must again call the attention of members who have offered to write to prisoners, to the necessity of *promptness*. Every prisoner is notified at once of the correspondent assigned to him, and delay causes needless worry. If it is impossible to write a letter at once, at least a postcard should be sent immediately, promising a letter as soon as possible.

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

EUGENICS GONE MAD

But God help the convict if he gets into the hands of the surgeons—he has enough to bear already. We now have the sterilization of degenerates and those convicted of sexual offenses recommended. Lynching or legally breaking the neck was bad enough, but to deprive a man of whatever manhood he has, and let him live, that is the latest confession of barbarism, the recommendation of scientific lunatics that we punish the victims of our rotten social conditions rather than aim at the causes, the drink traffic, for instance, for which we are responsible. The physically defective, the blind, deaf and dumb and those inclined to tuberculosis will follow next. Why not?

—*O. E. Library Critic, May 6, 1914.*

Now we have it. A movement has been started, headed by Mrs. E. H. Harriman and some others who are supposed to represent the principle that the rich shall inherit the earth, and ministered to by a number of biologists, which has for its object the enforcement of sexual sterilization of so-called defectives. The organization has large funds at its disposal, and its committee "demands" that 92,400 Americans be sterilized this year, the number to be gradually increased until by 1980 415,000 persons a year, in the United States alone, will be forcibly deprived of manhood or womanhood.

What is a defective? A defective is usually supposed to be one who has some physical or mental defect which can be transmitted to his offspring. The term is indefinitely elastic, however, and in a broad sense means anyone who is not what you think he should be, and who is likely to have children equally repugnant to your ideas. Just where the line is to be drawn it is difficult to say. In the Middle Ages defectives were those whose opinions differed from the teachings of the Church. They were summarily sterilized by burning at the stake. Another form of summary sterilization, in vogue today, is capital punishment or lynching. Once it was the priesthood which decided; today it is the judge or the mob, and to-

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morrow, if the views of the Harriman clique can be forced on us, it will be the surgeon, who will be judge, jury and executioner, and who will decide the right of every man of us to remain a man, of every woman to remain a woman.

Naturally I am not denying the possibility of a rational science of eugenics, a science with the aim of producing perfect offspring, but what these people are proposing is not science, but semi-murder cloaking itself with the name of science. We are facing a new era in which our bodies are to be allowed to remain intact only by permission of a priesthood of doctors, who will cut and slash here, squirt us full of serums there, and finally deprive us of the right of offspring. In Europe we are witnessing the crowning achievement of physical science in the production of the terrible instruments of destruction which are killing men by hundreds of thousands; tomorrow we are to see the triumph of biology in the emasculation of a large percentage—10 per cent is what the Committee claims to be defective—of the remainder. The new Reign of Terror will be one of sterilization instead of decapitation, and the guillotine will be replaced by the surgeon's knife, the executioner by the official gelder, "for the good of the Republic."

The keynote of eugenics is physical perfection, and it cannot be denied that this is most desirable. It would be well if all who are physically defective could be persuaded to adopt celibacy, just as it would be desirable for the moral defectives—those who steal railroads, for example—to adopt the same course and refuse to raise children to inherit their propensities.

The principle on which the eugenist works is the same as that by which we produce an improved race of hogs—breeding only from the most perfect. It is now proposed to add the other precaution of the stock raiser, sterilizing the remainder. There can hardly be a question that by proper selection a more perfect race of men could be produced, in fact, a race with any desired qualities. There is however one very important point to be observed, and it is this, that if the race is to be maintained in its perfect state it must be carefully shielded from adverse conditions. Leave the best breeds of domestic animals in a wild condition and they soon revert to their former state. Unless you maintain the perfect man under perfect conditions, the race will soon return to where it was before. The causes which produce defectives are many, but they may be summarized as poverty and ignorance on the one hand, leading to insanitary living, overwork, deprivation, and on the other, gross indulgence. Stamp out the offspring of the drunkard, but as long as you have the conditions leading to drunkenness, that is, the liquor traffic and the social ideals which lead to drinking, you will have to repeat the process indefinitely. Allow the social causes which lead to poverty on the one hand and the accumulation of extreme wealth on the other, and it will be the same. The Committee referred to claims that it can produce a practically perfect race before the end

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of this century, yet it asserts at the same time that it will have to continue its wholesale sterilizations. But supposing a physically perfect type can be produced, it is but a part of the issue. A physically perfect man may be and often is a brute and a savage. The causes leading to degeneracy are largely moral in their nature, and there is but little connection between physical perfection and moral perfection. The new race will be just as prone to backslide as before. And in order that eugenics may have its perfect work, it will be necessary to take moral attributes into account likewise. He who is weak willed, he who is ill tempered, he who shows undue disregard for the rights or property of others, he too will have to be deprived of reproductive power.

The eugenists are on the wrong track. They propose to doctor the symptoms and neglect the causes, which lie in the various forms of social maladjustment. The proposal to sterilize large numbers of defectives is nothing less than a reversion to savagery; it is the principle of the wild animal or savage which destroys its defective young. Coming from the source it does, it is a threat against human liberty; it is a refusal to take the rational but harder course of attacking the causes—harder, because it means some self-denial on the part of the "reformers"—and shows a determination to shirk their own part and cast the burden on their victims. The rich shall inherit the earth; they shall despoil the weaker, and having despoiled them, shall do away with them in the second generation with the aid of the surgeon.

It may be a humiliating confession to make, but it seems to be admitted, that there is a close connection between the psychic life and the sexual organs, and that interference with what nature has ordained results in serious disturbance and should only be tolerated when it is a question of life and death. To deprive a human being of reproductive power is not only to deprive him of the privilege of fatherhood and motherhood; much more, it is to deprive him in a large degree of manhood or womanhood. The desire to save the world defective children is laudable, but to replace them by an almost equal number of impotents, once-men, once-women, is a most questionable proceeding. And let it be borne in mind that unless the conditions resulting in degeneracy, in defectives, are removed, there will be no end to the process; we shall have a caste of eunuchs, a caste without hope of posterity, without family, with no privilege but that of working for that other caste to whom they owe their condition. It is bad enough as it is that men and women must pass their lives unmarried, but there are compensations for those who will seek them; but not so for those who have been forcibly deprived of human nature.

"But would you allow defective parents to give birth to defective offspring, a source of trouble to themselves and others?" Well, by the same rule you will advocate universal suicide, for no-

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body knows what suffering may be in store for his children, be they never so healthy. "Man is born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward," and I do not believe it can be circumvented, for it is one of the objects of this world life that man is to learn through suffering. Do what you may, the world cannot be made perfect in a day, and it never will be perfect, so long as the strong and healthy trample on those who are weaker, so long as we regard either strength or health as a justification for forcibly eliminating those who are not so healthy or strong. Granted that a few dangerous defectives have to be isolated, it is otherwise better to bear the evil and work strenuously for the removal of the causes. There is such a thing as an inalienable right, even for the defective, and especially the right to undisputed possession of his body.

There is no telling where this eugenic craze will end. It is one of the looming dangers of the future. Yesterday it was the criminal—decided to be such by the court—whom it was proposed to sterilize; today it is the epileptic, the insane; tomorrow it will be he with a weak heart, he who is suspected of predisposition to cancer or consumption, or he who has carious teeth. *One man in ten,* that is what they propose already. The Lord only knows where it will end when once the right of every man to retain as much of his manhood as he can, despite his defects, is denied. No one will be safe, for after all human nature is not much different today from the days of the *auto de fe.* Oppose the powers that be and you are a dangerous citizen—to the surgeon with you. No matter who they are, the proposals of these mad eugenists and parlor scientists should be fought tooth and nail, and every attempt to violate the sanctity of the human body resisted by everyone who has the present and future liberty of mankind at heart.

Mailing The Critic

The CRITIC cannot be mailed without envelopes. A kind friend, who values the CRITIC because he has been in prison himself, recently came forward and paid the bill for our last order of 50,000. These have to be ordered in large amounts to save cost, and when so ordered they cost $1.28 per thousand. A new order of this size is now due. Who will step forward and help us with it?

Special Request

The entire edition of the CRITIC of July 14th, containing the article *Prison Labor and Slave Labor,* is exhausted. As we have a request for a considerable number of this issue for propaganda purposes, if any of our friends who have this issue and can spare it, would send it to this office, it would be hugely appreciated. The sooner the better.

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Hope as a Hopper

Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, but always to be, blest.
—POPE'S *Essay on Man.*

Our hope has been springing eternally that more of the members of the LEAGUE and other readers of the CRITIC would appreciate our work in behalf of prisoners enough to give a little assistance in the way of hard cash as well as soft remarks. In fact, it has become such a leaper that it is now, with our growing obligations, kept in a state of continual hopping, under the necessity of meeting our office and publication expenses and under the prodding of the printer's devil. The exercise is doubtless wholesome, and, as a voluminous but abstemious—so far as we are concerned—correspondent says, "it is evidently part of our Karma," but it detracts very decidedly from our efficiency in the direction we have chosen. We would much rather move rapidly on the horizontal.

We really haven't time to count the letters we get every day, telling us how much the writer hopes that some other fellow will step forward and help us. When you are writing such a letter, don't forget to enclose a dollar bill or whatever you have handy, more or less. The offer of a stated monthly contribution would not be unwelcome.

All Kinds of Books

It is a mistake to suppose that we supply only the books on our lists. These are lists of books which we *lend* as well as sell. We are glad to fill orders for any books which are in print and to try to secure copies of books which are out of print.

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Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 38 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: Atlanta, Georgia, U. S. Penitentiary, 8; California, Folsom, 2; Colorado, 1; Indiana, 1; Leavenworth, Kansas, U. S. Penitentiary, 8; Maine, 6; New York, Auburn, 3; Oklahoma, 2; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary, 5; Vermont, 2.

In addition we have a number who have been disappointed by members who have not kept their promise to write.

The Harvest is Great--The Laborers Few

Notwithstanding our incessant requests for more volunteers, we are receiving six requests from prisoners for correspondents, to one who offers to help them. This is entirely too small a proportion. We should have three times as many volunteers to keep up to date. We secure these volunteers mostly through our own efforts and through the representations in the CRITIC. Is it not about time that some of our earnest members were making a serious effort to interest their friends? We do not need promises; we need actual help, and it is much better to nail anyone who is interested at once with an application blank than to depend on their remembering our address and writing to us. We will then take the matter up with them directly. Much better than just talking prison reform is to get one directly interested in one or two prisoners—it starts thinking as nothing else can.

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W. Q. Judge's version, cloth, $0.50; leather, sold only, $0.75.
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The O. E. Library League

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INDETERMINATE SENTENCE

The theory of the indeterminate sentence is, that the convict shall be kept in prison until he has shown his fitness to be out of it. It involves a new principle, in that it makes the length of the term actually served dependent not only on the act for which he has been tried, but on the probability that he will repeat it. On the face of it this sounds reasonable. If the object of imprisonment is to protect society, or to reform the offender, or both, rather than merely geting back at him for what he has done, what is more reasonable than to isolate him until he proves his fitness to be free? If it appears that he has had the necessity of self-restraint sufficiently hammered into him by his confinement, why detain him longer? In other words, the indeterminate sentence proposes to treat the convict precisely as a hospital would treat a patient, harboring him until he is fully recovered, but not one day longer; and as the duration of most diseases or injuries cannot be predicted in advance to a day, so there is no such thing as a fixed term in a hospital.

The original form of sentence was undoubtedly indeterminate. Men were thrust into dungeons to get rid of them, kept there at the will of an arbitrary and absolute power, and quite likely to be forgotten. The substitution of the fixed sentence was a great advance, whether fixed by law or by the judge, because it imposed a check on arbitrary power and allowed the man to know with certainty when he would be free. At the same time it is based on the absurd notion that there can be such a thing as a time equivalent of every offense, that every illegal act can have its quota of punishment measured in advance by days, months or years. When fixed by law it must of necessity be made to fit the average case and takes no account of differences in individuals; when fixed by the judge, within the limits prescribed by law, it assumes infallibility on his part in judging the character of the man sentenced, an utter impossibility. A month's imprisonment may mean more to one man than a year to another, and it depends so largely on inner and outer circumstances that nothing short of omniscence could determine

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justly how to fit the punishment to the offense. The fixed sentence is therefore the most arbitrary thing imaginable.

In the effort to secure greater justice for the convict, and doubtless also to relieve the plethoric condition of the state boarding houses, several states have adopted indeterminate sentence laws, and while they vary considerably in detail their essence is usually to make it obligatory on the court to impose a sentence of not less than a certain number of months or years, with a maximum which cannot be exceeded. The limits vary greatly—one may read of sentences of not less than two, nor more than twenty years. After the minimum period is passed the convict is eligible for parole, a matter which lies beyond the jurisdiction of the court and rests with the parole board. The maximum limit gives assurance to the man that he will not be held longer no matter how unfavorably disposed towards him the authorities may be, while no amount of favoritism can enable him to escape with less than the minimum which the court deems necessary.

Simple as the theory of the indeterminate sentence is, it is by no means as ideal as would appear at first sight. It is claimed that the judge can and often does practically circumvent it by determining how long he wants the man to be confined and fixing his minimum accordingly, making it long enough to keep him certainly in prison for the time he desires, and with a further extension should the parole board not be favorably disposed. The result is that he is frequently in for a longer time than if an out and out flat sentence had been imposed.

Quite apart from this, however, the indeterminate sentence cannot have the value attributed to it in assuming that the condemned shall have the chance to prove that he is fit to return to society. Imprisonment has the twofold object of protecting society against further depredations and of making the convict over into a safe person to be at large—protection and reformation, and reformation means protection of society in the future. Prisons as conducted along present lines are not and never can be places where a man can be fully made over. Give him every possible chance in the way of training and you are still wide of the mark. The reasons are simple enough. The prison, no matter how unpleasant it may be, is a simple place to live in as compared with the world outside. There are the rules, and whether reasonable or unreasonable, it is within the power of every man of moderate self-control to obey them. They are laid down and posted up in a way that one cannot help knowing them. That a man goes through prison without a single bad mark means nothing at all than that he has self-control enough to obey them, and every incentive to do so, since he is constantly watched, and violation brings speedy punishment. The worst and most irredemable man can make a good record if he chooses, just as well as the best. Prison rules are not made for the development of character, but for the discipline

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needed under the circumstances; they bear little relation to the conditions outside. Almost anbody can be good under favorable conditions, in fact, that is why most of us keep out of prison. There is but one way by which the character can be judged, and that is by exposure to temptation. Prison life offers few such tests. There are no cash boxes or safes standing around to be robbed, no people with pockets worth picking; a forged check could not be passed, counterfeiting plants and opium joints could not be carried on successfully, and whatever temptations for violence exist, the absence of weapons and the presence of the guards are insuperable obstacles. In short, prison is a remarkably favorable place for appearing to be good and for making good resolutions, and where being good means behaving well because you have no temptation to behave otherwise. From the standpoint of a chance to be good without serious effort it is heaven as compared with the outside world, as many a man has found after setting foot without the prison gate.

There is not and cannot be any absolute method of determining whether a prisoner is fit to be set at liberty except by trying him on it, and seeing how he behaves. The honor system and the self-governing systems coming into vogue have great value as a preliminary test, but even these are limited because of the relative absence of temptations and the certainty that virtue will bring its prompt reward and wrong its swift punishment. Hence the parole system. The man is turned loose in the world for a try out, but with a string tied to him; if he falls, back he comes to serve the balance of his sentence. If reform and protection are the reasons for imprisonment there should be no such thing as an absolute discharge unless preceded by a period of parole. If a man is put in prison to protect society, it is clearly absurd to let him loose beyond recall till it is fairly clear that society is safe—otherwise it means risking all the cost and trouble of a new trial. On the other hand, it is useless and worse than useless to keep him in prison when the cost and disgrace of a trial, of exposure, have been sufficient to bring him to his senses. Many an offense, otherwise regarded as most serious, is sufficiently punished by a very light sentence; the same is true of offenses committed under unusual stress.

Of the minimum limit it may be said that it gives the opportunity of placing the offender under observation for a limited period and affords him the chance for moral "'stock taking." It might seem that the maximum limit is unnecessary and that it would be better to make the sentence for not less than the minimum, with as much more as may seem necessary, but it has this justification, that it affords the convict a protection against those officials who might be unfavorably disposed toward him, and who might be inclined to detain him indefinitely without parole. Just as prison conditions are widely different from those outside, so the conduct

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of the man in prison cannot always be taken as a sure criterion of his conduct when at liberty. Many a man who would chafe under the rule of a prison would play the game admirably when placed entirely on his honor. That he resents the regulations, or even attempts to escape does not mark him as a villain; the best of men might do these.

Under an ideal law we should have three periods in the life of the convict:

First, the short period, limited by the minimum term of the sentence, during which he must be retained and is not subject to parole. In the case of first offenders, this should generally be very short, and even in the case of repeaters, when it is obvious that the offense was committed under stress rather than by choice.

Second, the period between the minimum and maximum limits, during which he may be paroled provided he does not manifest obvious unfitness for it.

Third, the period beginning with the expiration of the maximum limit of his sentence, when he is absolutely entitled to parole as a right, and which should terminate only when in the course of his freedom he shows that restriction is no longer necessary. This would substitute for absbolute discharge a period of probation, the length of which would have to be determined by the parole board or otherwise on the merits of each individual case, or which might terminate automatically after a fixed period, in the absence of incriminating evidence.

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Special Attention of Our Prison Members

Here is something for your serious consideration—think over it. All of you have been introduced to some of our volunteer correspondents. In some cases it has been a misfit, but in the great majority of cases you have derived either pleasure or profit, or both, from the relation which the LEAGUE has been instrumental in bringing about. If nothing else has been accomplished, we have at least opened a window toward the sun for you.

Now, don't you think it would be just the square thing for you to get some of your companions interested, so that they too may share the benefits? It too often happens that those who get a good correspondent run away like a chicken with an apple core, to enjoy it alone. That is fair neither to your fellows nor to us. It doesn't look well, either. There are plenty of people who would like the opportunity of helping you in one way or another. It is our business to seek them out. But you, on your part, must do some seeking also. We do not draw lines; we are not after picked men; any prisoner will receive out attention, no matter how much he may think the whole world against him. Get your friends interested. They can use the application slips, if you have them, or they can write me a letter, saying they want to join the LEAGUE, and if they choose, they can tell me enough to help me in finding them a friend. If they have no writing privilege, they can authorize you to apply for them. It costs not one red cent.

So hustle around a little and help get the windows open.

THE EDITOR.

From A Recent Letter

Editor's note—The following is from a letter of one of our volunteer correspondents who took up writing to prisoners after some urging and not a little misgiving.

My dear Dr. Stokes:— Sept. 14, 1915.

. . . You were quite right when you said the letters would be of benefit to me. How great a benefit you can hardly estimate as you do not know just how I am situated and what stress I have upon me at times. These letters have not only given me an occupation but have given my mind a trend that makes life so much the more worth living, as I feel that perhaps I am doing something to "ease the burden of the world." I seem to have had the power to write on the subjects that appeal to my correspondents and I consider myself fortunate to have the gift for making the correspondence of interest and probably of help to them.

This means a great deal in my own life for the routine is monotonous and dreary, without any outside interests. I did not think one could take such a vital interest in perfect strangers even on such short acquaintance, and then only pen friends, but the subject seems to grip one and command not only attention but real heart-interest.

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE RATIONALE OF PRISON CORRESPONDENCE

Prison reform is a vast subject, it is hardly needful to say. It covers everything from the administration of justice, the economic, sanitary and financial administration of the prison, the kind of labor the convict must perform, the discipline and training he must receive, down to the cut of his hair and the quality of hash and coffee he consumes. It means much more. It means the reformation of the prisoner and equally the reformation of the officers who have him in charge. And none of these things are possible without an enlightened public sentiment—your own reformation being included. If public opinion demands retaliation, if it believes in repaying crime with brutality, it will put the convict under the charge of brutal officials, with the result that he will be made more brutal than before. On the contrary, if it believes in trying to make the prisoner as other men are, it will adopt such tactics as will humanize rather than control by fear and hatred.

We are concerned at this moment only with the relation existing between the prisoner within and the man or woman without the walls. To isolate an offender for the purpose of protecting society and of reforming him does not of necessity imply absolute separation. One cannot commit burglary or murder through the medium of the mail sack. On the contrary, the only valid reason which can be advanced for total isolation is the plea of keeping him from the influence of former bad associates who might interfere with the growth of the flower of probity which the glorious sunshine of prison life is supposed to foster.

Think of it! To cause this flower to bloom, we remove the man from society, where, without doubt, he has many evil associations, but where it is possible for him to form endless good ones, and place him where his only companions are those who are like-minded with himself. It is a notorious fact that prisons are breeding places for criminal thoughts. The young offender, the man who has committed but one offense perhaps, and that thoughtlessly or ignorantly, is made the companion of men who have spent a lifetime in criminal pursuits. Imprisonment means isolation from

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possible good influences, but it does not means isolation from bad ones.

It is a fact as obvious as daylight that we tend to take on, either intentionally or unintentionally, the habits and thoughts of those with whom we associate. It is almost impossible to avoid it. The strong personality molds those about him, but the average man is molded by his associates. The dragnet of the law and the police brings together certain objectionable classes and places them under one roof. It is as if people with broken legs, liver complaint and cancer were placed in one hospital ward with smallpox and tuberculosis.

And the regulations are expressly framed so as to prevent association with those elements which might have an uplifting influence. Visiting is allowed, to be sure, under severe restrictions; the men are at work and cannot be interfered with, which is right. But this does not apply to hours of leisure. Which is better, that the man shall spend his time writing letters, or in recounting his old adventures? Yet in most prisons the inmate is locked up in his cell. He may talk to his cell mate, who may or may not be better than he, but when it comes to talking through the medium of a letter to those on the outside who may be able to help him, to inspire him with better ideals or at least to give him a glimpse of a better life, no, then he can write but one letter a month, or it may be, one a week. There are but twelve states which do not limit the number of letters a prisoner may write. Our Federal Government, which should lead reform in such matters, actually proceeds on the principle that the worse a prisoner is, so much the more shall he be exposed to the contagion of the prison and so much the less be allowed the benefit of good influences from without. Even states with such progressive ideas as Oregon, Washington and Pennsylvania still restrict letter writing to one letter a month.

If you or I profit by associating with people of good sense, sound morals and high ideals, so will the prisoner also. To throw obstacles in his way is to obstruct the path of reformation. Granted that letters written or received must be inspected, which is right and necessary, the restrictions which impede the formation of friendships with proper people are nothing short of criminal. To get the prisoner out of his environment, mentally at least, that should be the aim.

For this reason every relation with outside people who can inspire or educate the convict, or lacking these, can arouse interest in things good in themselves, or even give him innocent pleasure, should be encouraged. Mere friendship is beneficial. Look for that which is best in yourself; in a large part of the cases you will find that you "caught" it from a friend, for good thoughts as well as bad are contagious. No matter what facilities for improvement you may have in the way of lectures or libraries, nothing can take the place of the personal touch, of the interest of a friend in your progress.

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I know that some people who ought to understand human nature better, have declared themselves as opposed to correpondence between prisoners and outsiders. Strange logic this, by which they arrive at the conclusion that exclusive association with his own kind can be more uplifting to the prisoner than association with others through letters. I am convinced, not as a theory only, but on the basis of a very large amount of direct observation, that personal relations of friendship, as brought about by correspondence, supply the prisoner with a certain element of benefit which cannot be obtained in any other way. I do not claim it as a panacea, but I do maintain that it tends to influence his thoughts in a way which is decidedly beneficial.

Doubtless many prisoners have no such desire. They are satisfied with their environment—the best sign that they need waking up. But the craving of many prisoners for the encouragement which the mail brings is almost beyond the comprehension of those who have friends in abundance, with whom they may meet at will.

The betterment of the prisoner is, however, but one side of the question of prison correspondence. Many of my friends have expressed the utmost astonishment at the way in which a new world has opened before them. We have our everyday friends reared amid an environment like our own, friends who meet together, eat together, go to the same church or club with us, read the same paper and in short see the world through the same glasses as our own. We learn but little from them. But when we come in touch with him who has been through the mill, who has suffered from want, who has been the victim of criminal impulses and bad associates, who has been arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced, a man who is still a man for all that, then indeed we begin to see what this big prison problems means. We begin to understand the reasons why Christ sought out and associated with sinners. There are few things one can do which will give a broader sympathy, a deeper insight into human nature and a higher respect for the inner man which is in all, no matter how deep they may have sunk into the mire. We begin to appreciate some of the really essential problems of prison reform, we see that no matter what else you may do to better penal methods the real road to the reform of the convict lies through his heart—and yours. I confess very frankly that though I have studied under masters of many kinds, the master who has given me most inspiration, most faith, in the ultimate good in man, is the man behind the bars. And it is my greatest desire that I may introduce those who may read these lines to this master, the Man within the convict.

And this is something which is open to everyone who wishes—no examinations to be passed, no tuition fees, no great expenditure of time. Anyone who can write a friendly letter, who is willing to give a portion of the time wasted in reading trivial news items in the paper, in playing cards, embroidering underwear, gossiping

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about neighbors, can enter this new world of helping and being helped. It is said truly that one-half the world knows not how the other half lives. Still truer is it that the world at large knows nothing of the life of the submerged men and women who are either inmates of our prisons or likely to become such. Passing by on the other side is a confirmed habit with most of us. We hire men to "suppress" crime, and think we have done our whole duty. The work is done as that of the hireling usually is. It is high time that each one who theoretically believes in the "salvation of sinners" shall take a vital interest in the way it is being done, and shall not content himself with the thought "Oh, we have Christ and the police, why should I bother myself about it?" No, that is not religion, it is not ethics, it is not common sense. Your attitude of thanking God that you are not as other men are is but the attitude of the Pharisee unless you also thank God that you have a chance to make them as you are, and proceed to avail yourself of it. And to do this; to know their weaknesses, their difficulties, their latent possibilities, you cannot dream; you must be willing to know them in the only possible way—by getting acquainted.

Attention of U. S. District Judges and Attorneys

To the Editor of THE CRITIC: October 1, 1915.

For sixteen months in the Atlanta prison I listened every Sunday to addresses from the Chaplain and visitors urging the prisoners to reform. The men accorded the speakers a respectful hearing, but one might as well go into the wards of a hospital and plead with the patients to get well. In neither case could they recover except with proper assistance and under proper conditions.

There is a close analogy between physical disease and a distorted mind which leads to criminality. For centuries the world suffered from horrible plagues and pestilences and also from a scourge of crime. Our modern scientific knowledge has taught us methods of prevention and cure which have reduced epidemics of physical disease to a minimum, but these methods have not been applied to the prevention of crime and the people are paying a frightful penality for this neglect. Neither physical disease nor crime will ever be wholly eradicated, but we do not for this reason regard disease as an uncontrollable visitation of Providence, nor should we so regard crime. Both of them are in a large measure preventable by very definite human agencies and analogous procedures, and the degree to which either one of them persists is a measure of the ignorance and carelessness of society. In case of physical disease we strive to isolate hopelessly infected individuals, to quarantine suspects under as favorable conditions as possible and to enforce measures of prevention. When society adopts a similar

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attitude towards crime, we will then be well on the way to its elimination.

We must have free social clinics where wayward youths and girls are prescribed for, not as outcasts from the law, but as ailing, undeveloped members of the community. I believe that our laws are too severe with first offenders and too lenient with hardened criminals. We should deal with the latter class as we do with the the leper—when it becomes evident that he is incurable he is permanently isolated where he cannot contaminate others. So it should be with the individual who has reached the stage where his presence is a menace to the welfare of society. Crime is one of the most contagious of diseases. I would not, however, leave it to any judge or jury to decide when a man has become incorrigible but to a commission of experts, nor should the time ever come, even for so-called incorrigibles, when a man desiring and seeking his own redemption could not demand another chance and call upon society to assist him therein.

In short, we must treat crime as we treat physical manifestations of unfitness, curing it when possible, isolating it when cure has proven unattainable, and maintaining towards it always the same attitude of helpful interest which we now hold towards physical ailments, regardless of whether it results from the deliberate recklessness of the sufferer or from unfortunate conditions for which he is not responsible.

As a condition precedent to this much needed general reform we must awaken a sympathetic interest in the problems which it presents and nowhere would this attitude be more influential than among our judiciary, whose opinions on such matters are powerful both with the law-makers and the general public. Recognizing this fact, I have sought for some means of appealing to them and as I have no personal influence among them it has occurred to me to enter the names of our District Judges and District Attorneys as subscribers to your publication, hoping that your very able and practical articles on prison matters will be read by them with open minds and an appreciation of the vital need for improvement in our prison system.

I enclose post office order for $75 to cover these subscriptions for the next year. On pages 524 and 525 of the World's Almanac you will find a list of the names and addresses of these officials, there being one hundred District Judges and eighty-six District Attorneys. This payment is more than the subscription price of 25c per annum ,but I understand that it costs somewhat more than that to issue the CRITIC and have reckoned the payment accordingly.

Yours truly,

EX-CONVICT 4704.

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A Fable From Alsop

A certain Philanthropist who believed in "The Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color" and who was desirous of expressing that belief by helping "Brothers" whom the State had imprisoned and made incapable of helping themselves, was given the opportunity of aiding one of them who had had the misfortune to be born with a black body. This was a bit too much for the Believer in Universal Brotherhood, who forgot that the Body is but the Overcoat of the Soul, and declined the task.

A Neighbor, hoping to learn the way in which this action was reconciled with the professed belief, asked: "Do you really mean when you speak of color that you include white, yellow and red men, but not black?"

"Certainly," replied the other. "The Dictionary defines 'black' as 'total absence of color,' which is not included in my creed, so I am right—and besides, I don't like niggers."

Moral—A Dictionary is very convenient, and often comes in handy when we have Principles which do not fit in with our Prejudices.

Recent Additions

Field, Anne P. L.—The Story of Canada Blackie, $1.10; loaned.
With introduction by Thomas Mott Osborne. A true narrative of vital importance to all prison workers.

Moll, Albert—The Sexual Life of the Child, $1.90; loaned.

Sempervirens—He who expects us to use a dollar's worth of time in supplying information in return for a two-cent stamp. It costs us two cents to read his letter.

THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

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(Signed) H. N. STOKES, *Editor.*

Sworn and subscribed before me October 6th, 1915.

FRANK B. TIPTON, *Notary Public.*

Entered as second-class matter April 8, 1914, at the Post-office at Washington, D. C., under Act of March 8, 1879.

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V Wednesday, November 3, 1915 No. 6

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

SOME MODERN INSTANCES

Two Years' Experience as a Prisoner in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, the Model Prison of the World, by *George B. Wright,* who is now confined in this Institution and Innocent of the Crime charged. Price 50 cents; sold by the League for the benefit of the author.

This booklet of 79 pages is written by an inmate of the Leavenworth Penitentiary, and apparently issued with the sanction of that institution. The first part contains the personal story of Mr. Wright; the second is an account of the Penitentiary, its departments, officers and management, and is illustrated by photographs.

Mr. Wright tells a plain, unvarnished tale of great interest and in a style characteristically his own. I may summarize it by saying that he conceived the idea of supplying fruit direct to consumers in large cities, and having developed it in the way of selling blueberries at a good profit to himself and a large saving to his customers, he organized the Northwestern Growers' Association among the farmers and fruit growers of Michigan, with the same object. The Association proved a great success, which was his undoing. It was too much for the commission men, who had a strong organization and who, after vainly trying to induce him to turn traitor, managed to have the mail of the Association held up under a post office order, and Wright himself arrested and thrown into a filthy county jail to await trial. In short, he was the victim of a "frame up," conceived by his business competitors and executed with the cooperation of unscrupulous officials of the Government. Even the fact that he did not fill orders which the post office held and refused to deliver to him was made the basis of a further charge of fraud. After having been detained for months in a penal pest hole, till his health had been wrecked, and his wife had decamped with his funds and he was too ill and too poor to defend himself, he was put through a farcical trial, or rather sentenced without trial by a United States District judge, and railroaded to the penitentiary.

The story is well worth reading as an illustration of the way in which laws, good in themselves, can be made the instruments of oppression in the hands of competitors and unscrupulous officials. It

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is shocking enough, if but half of it be true. If you call it a lie *in toto,* I reply that it is too big a lie to be untrue. It is only the small lies that have a chance to pass. It is further interesting to note that this document, which is sent out from a United States penitentiary, and which may therefore be supposed to have official sanction, makes the gravest charges against officials in the same and another Government department. One may well ask how a man who is conducting an honest business and giving satisfaction to his patrons can be imprisoned without trial at the instigation of competitors whose pocket nerve is touched. We know the average prosecuting attorney, a man bent on convicting, honestly if he can, dishonestly if he must, but that the victim is still detained while those who have persecuted him are at large, is a striking comment on our system.

Mr. Wright's glowing praise of the Leavenworth Penitentiary will interest all of our readers who have friends in that institution, and while the objection may be raised that the article is published from prison and with the sanction of officials, and therefore cannot be expected to show the darker side, still, one cannot help seeing that our Government maintains a very respectable prison, as prisons go. We learn from Mr. Wright that the officials are gentlemen with the real interests of the inmates at heart, and that he has never experienced anything but kindness and consideration.

That ten per cent of the inmates are innocent of the charges on which they are imprisoned may well be believed, in view of the author's experience. When will Congress take some steps towards the appointment of a Prison Attorney, whose duty shall be to see that miscarriages of justice are remedied without laying the whole burden on the shoulders and pockets of the inmates? As things go at present, the man unjustly sentenced must either pay a big fee to a lawyer to get him out, or stay there and be damned.

The Story of Canada Blackie, by *Anne P. L. Field,* with an Introduction by *Thomas Mott Osborne.* $1.10. Loaned.

Nothing better could have been written in justification of Warden Osborne's policy toward convicts than *The Story of Canada Blackie.* Canada Blackie was for years considered New York's most dangerous and hardened criminal. After having been kept for years in solitary confinement and subjected to many of the brutalities of the old system, only to become more cunning and more desperate, he finally came under the influence of Mr. Osborne, and experienced a "change of heart." The book consists largely of letters written during this period of his life, and his sentiments expressed would do credit to a citizen of the most immaculate probity. Here is an actual example of what may be effected by kindness and sympathy, when harshness and brutality have been unavailing, and it outweighs all of the rubbish which has been written about pampering and coddling convicts. I commend the reading of this book

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to all who would inform themselves as to what brotherliness is able to effect, and equally to those who believe that harshness can reform, as well as to those who are inclined to pose as preachers and commend the convict to "make his peace with God."

One must not be misled, however, by the example of Canada Blackie into thinking that all desperate offenders are his duplicates. Without doubt there is in every case, deep beneath the surface, the real man, but the depth to which one must penetrate varies enormously. That a man is an enemy of society, a desperado, means nothing more than that he is at loggerheads with the world, and has the force of character to maintain his position. This may be discreditable to the man, but it may be equally so to society. I am inclined to think that the responsibility is about equally to be shared. There are many things besides respect for law and order which go to make up the man. There is such a thing as misdirected virtue, and those very qualities which we condemn because they cause us inconvenience may when seen by some Higher Power appear as shining lights. Canada Blackie was a man of intensely sympathetic nature and when forbidden an outlet towards his fellows, he expended it on his cats. There are those, however, whose nature is so intensely selfish that but little can be expected of them; these are the really hardened ones. The stool pigeon, the man who traffics in women, such an one is far more removed from the hope of reform than he who has the qualities of what we commonly call the desperado.

Canada Blackie never had the chance to make good in a real sense; his reform was never fully put to the test. Society robbed him of his health—murdered him, in short—and he received his pardon only on his death bed. Would he have continued in this new attitude had he been sent out into the world as is our custom, friendless and with nothing but a five dollar bill and the prison stigma upon him? Who knows?

Torpedoing A Library

We have just learned that a shipment of theosophical books, which never turned up, was on the steamer *Hesperian,* which was sunk by a German torpedo. These books are now at the bottom of the ocean, and let us hope that the fishes are getting the benefit of them. We will ask those of our friends whom we are compelled to disappoint, not to cast stones at us because we are delayed in filling their orders, but to ponder on whether this is what the transportation companies call loss through "Act of God," or otherwise. In either case, we are so much out of pocket, as they were not insured, and the only consolation the publisher has offered us is the suggestion that perhaps some of our German-American friends will undertake to compensate us for the loss. In this suggestion we heartily concur.

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A Fable From Alsop

A devout Member of the Church, having read the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, and being imbued thereby with a desire to do some good in This World, as well as qualifying for The Next, joined a League which made a point of following the precepts of the Founder of the Church, by ministering to those in Prison.

Having discovered that some of the members of this League believed that the Holy Number is Seven instead of Three, and imagining that it was its object to spread this damnable heresy, she promptly withdrew from that company, leaving the prisoners to their fate.

Being asked whether the Sheep were preferred to the Goats because their hair was curly, or because they helped the suffering brothers, she mumbled something about keeping her Wedding Garment unspotted, lest she be shown to a back seat in Heaven.

Moral—Not all of the teachings of the Friend of Publicans and Sinners can convince some of His Disciples that following His example and doing His work are of more importance than parading in a Garment of Sanctity, and that it is overalls and aprons which the Master demands of us in this work-a-day world, rather than evening dress.

Best Books For Prison Workers

Everybody interested in prison work and problems should read:
Donald Lowrie; My Life in Prison ($1.35).
Thomas Mott Osborne; Within Prison Walls ($1.65).
Winifred Louise Taylor; The Man Behind the Bars ($1.60).
A. P. L. Field; The Story of Canada Blackie ($1.10).

Any of these may be rented from the Library.

Ask for our list of books on prisons and prisoners.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

Please enroll me as a member of THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE.

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Caution About Address

Owing to the loss of a number of letters recently, because of faulty address, we request our friends to be careful to see that the street address, 1207 Q Street, N. W., is distinctly written. It would also be well to place the name of H. N. Stokes on the envelope.

From A Prisoner's Letter

My dear Dr. Stokes:— Oct. 16, 1915

I am writing this letter as an apology for the way I have hitherto felt towards yourself and your organization. Although I cannot lay claim to Missouri as my native state, I usually qualify as a member of that "show me" society, and I wish to state right here that as far as your LEAGUE is concerned I have certainly been shown.

When first my attention was called to your propaganda it greatly amused me and my thought at the time was that you were sponsor for another one of those mawkish, sentimental collections of "mollycoddles" that do more harm than good to the cause of the poor unfortunates incarcerated in such places as my present abode. What first made me sit up and take notice was the apparent change that had come over some of the boys with whom I associate daily. Upon inquiring as to the cause, I elicited the fact that through you they had been put in touch with some good people with whom they were corresponding. An occasional sunshiny letter from the outside means so much to the men here, and those who by this means have sent gladness into the desolate lives of the men here have surely used their time to excellent advantage in so doing. . . .

Very respectfully,

J. G. R.

How Can I Help The League?

By cash contributions, no matter how large or small.

By buying your books through it, rather than through others who charge you the same price, while having no motive other than personal profit.

By enrolling as a member and volunteering as a correspondent, especially with prisoners. Correspondents for prison work are urgently needed.

By paying the subscription to the CRITIC and subscribing for your friends.

By interesting your friends in any branch of our work.

By donating such books as we can use directly, or sell.

By keeping your promises faithfully, whatever they may be, without putting us to the cost of follow-up letters.

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A Constitutional Antipathy

We are constantly receiving offers to correspond with prisoners from people who state that they do not wish to join the LEAGUE and that they are constitutionally opposed to joining anything.

This is an attitude which no one can criticize. At the same time we call the attention of these good people to the fact that the names of prisoners are usually given to us in confidence, and it would not be right to give them to those who have no connection with the LEAGUE. Names of prisoners do not drop on us like the gentle rain from heaven. Our prison connections are either directly or indirectly the result of endless labor and expense on the part of the LEAGUE. Besides, in most cases considerable correspondence is involved. It is a fact that few of the members, even, turn in enough to meet the actual cost of the work they throw on this office. Consequently, when it comes to outsiders, we can only say: You cannot expect to avail yourself of the foundation the LEAGUE has laid, while refusing it your cooperation. You are quite at liberty to enter this field; we shall be glad if you will do so—it is the Master's field, not ours. But you cannot reasonably expect to make use of our organization and facilities without in turn giving us your moral support. Hunt up your own prisoners; develop your own system; gain your own experience; make your own mistakes; take the long way around, but don't ask us to start you when you coolly tell us that you want nothing to do with us. You may have your antipathies; so have we.

Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 103 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: Atlanta, Georgia, U. S. Penitentiary, 11; California, Folsom, 32; California, San Quentin, 3; Indiana, 1; Leavenworth, Kansas, U. S. Penitentiary, 13; Maine, 9; Montana, 5; New York, Clinton, 3; New York, Sing Sing, 9; New York, Women's Prison, 6; Nevada, 2; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary 3; Vermont, 2 (women); Washington, 4.

In addition we have a number who have been disappointed by members who have not kept their promise to write.

THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

Headquarters: 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

[List No. 2] Theosophy

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Karma, a Novel, $0.50.
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Occult Essays, $1.00.
The Occult World, $1.25.
Contains more information about the Masters than any other book.
The Rationale of Mesmerism, $1.25.
The Spiritual Powers and the War, paper, $0.25.
Transactions of the London Lodge, by *A. P. Sinnett*:
The Pyramids and Stonehenge, paper, $0.35.
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BY

The O. E. Library League

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

"WHAT ARE YOU, ANYHOW?"

The Editor is constantly in receipt of letters from people who express the desire to be of some help to the unfortunate men and women in prison, but who demand, as a prerequisite to this highly laudable and Christian work, that they shall be informed just what the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE is, who supports it and what the private opinions of its members are on various topics, chiefly religious, or who fear that by joining they will be supporting something of which they cannot approve. Some of these jump to wholly unwarranted conclusions, and finally pass by on the other side, lest they find themselves in uncongenial or unholy company.

In order to remove misapprehensions, and at the risk of boring many of our members, who know better, it is desirable to publish from time to time a plain statement as to the nature of the LEAGUE, its objects, and the character of its members. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Let me say, then, that the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE is an Association of Sinners—I say sinners, because the mortals who have reached the point where they feel entitled to throw stones would hardly be in sympathy with its aims; they would run too much risk of soiling the skirts of their Pharisaical garments. The LEAGUE is a most peculiar organization. In round numbers two-thirds of its members are men or women who have been sentenced to prison — sinners in the legal sense of the term. The other one-third consists of sinners who have not been tagged as such by the courts, but who probably make the confession themselves every Sunday or oftener. In general the one-third who are not yet in jail have the aim to help, instruct, guide, comfort or amuse the two-thirds who are. The two-thirds in prison are put in the way of absorbing some valuable ideas regarding a better life, and incidentally, of getting some help now and then in making a fresh start in that direction. On the other hand, it is expected that the one-third shall be able to learn in turn some valuable lessons from the two-thirds, lessons about the causes leading to crime, the difficulties and temptations which many have to meet, and the ways of meeting them. Then there is a sprinkling of those who, while not taking an

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active part, sympathize with the aims of the LEAGUE and desire to give their moral or material support.

It cannot be too emphatically stated that the LEAGUE is not a religious organization, that it is not attached to, controlled, or dominated by any creed, sect, denomination or belief of any kind whatever. It has members of great variety of opinions; not one of these is in a majority or anything approaching it. No questions are ever asked regarding the personal opinions of its members, and as a rule these are unknown. When such information is volunteered, record is made of it in order to be used when occasion demands it. No effort is made to censor or interfere with the correspondence between outside members and prisoners, as long as this is within the bounds of propriety and is not calculated to infringe the rules or policy of the various penal institutions. If a Protestant prisoner, a Roman Catholic, a Jew, a Hindu, a Socialist, desires a correspondent of his own faith, such is assigned to him, if possible. Nothing could be further from the aims of the LEAGUE than propaganda in behalf of any particular views, orthodox, or heterodox. Any member is at liberty to present his personal opinions, whatever they may be, to his correspondent, as he would to any other friend—he is also equally cautioned not to do so when it appears to be out of place.

The Headquarters of the LEAGUE, in Washington, constitute a sort of clearing house through which those who desire to help prisoners are put in touch with those whom they can help. Because of our wide prison connections, prisoners write to us for correspondents, while those who desire to help them write to us for their names. It is the policy of the LEAGUE to require all who desire to benefit through its facilities, whether prisoners or not, to enroll as members. The names of all members are strictly confidential; they are neither published, nor given to others except upon their own request. It is therefore impossible to give the names of prisoners to any but members. Not only is this the only honorable course, but it cannot be expected that those who decline to give the LEAGUE at least their moral support should make use of its facilities, which often entails considerable correspondence.

Besides encouraging personal work with prisoners, the CRITIC is an exponent of the general problems of prison reform, and aims to present these problems in a popular and untechnical form for the information of its members and the public. Now and then the Editor expresses his opinions on other topics, either for the information, amusement or disgust of its readers, but no one is obliged to read these comments. The LEAGUE is in no wise responsible for them. To take offense and to kick over the traces because you do not agree with the Editor on some secondary and irrelevant topic is quite as reasonable as to refuse to read the news in a paper because you don't like the editor's political opinions. You are given

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a chance to work in a field which is congenial to you. If you see something in the CRITIC which you do not like, don't read it; you can then pursue your work unhampered, and if this work is your duty or your pleasure, it is quite as much so, even if you consider the Editor a lunatic, or just a plain crank. That is his affair, not yours.

The name O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE was adopted in the beginning, wisely or not—that may be a matter for difference of opinion—because it originated among some friends of the O. E. LIBRARY. The initials "O. E." so far as the LEAGUE is concerned, have no meaning whatever other than as a distinguishing mark, nor do they commit it or its members to any definite policy, any more than the fact that your name is Smith indicates that you are a blacksmith, and requires you to work in a smithy. The LEAGUE was born with that name, and proposes to hold on to it, just as you were born Smith, and propose to remain Smith.

No one who joins the LEAGUE is expected either to adopt the peculiar views of the Editor or of any of the other members whose opinions differ from his own. Indeed, owing to the fact that all association between members is through correspondence, and that members are never brought into touch with others except on direct request, it is impossible for anyone to be subjected to annoyance in this way. The LEAGUE is practically split up into small groups, quite isolated from each other. Most of the members are corresponding with two or more prisoners. If they desire to be in touch with other outside members having similar interests, it is arranged when possible, but only on request.

The O. E. LIBRARY is a separate organization. It neither controls nor is controlled by the LEAGUE, nor does it dictate the policy of the LEAGUE in any way. The LEAGUE is not responsible for the books which the LIBRARY circulates. At the same time, the LIBRARY renders very material assistance to the LEAGUE in the way of office accommodations, clerical work and publishing, as well as financial support. In return for this, the CRITIC gives considerable space to aiding the LIBRARY, and in order to avoid confusion of addresses, the same address is generally used. No one who supports the LEAGUE is thereby supporting the LIBRARY, either morally or otherwise. You may say that this is a distinction without a difference. As a matter of fact the accounts are kept entirely separate; the LIBRARY aids the LEAGUE just as any private individual might do. While, therefore, members are asked to purchase their books through the LIBRARY, they are asked simply to take this means of aiding the LEAGUE.

It is hoped that these explanations will suffice to ease the qualms of conscience which some would-be members may suffer. It will be seen how utterly baseless are the fears of those who have taken alarm at some word in the CRITIC, lest they be encouraging

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something they do not approve of, or be subjected to annoyance. But one thing is expected of them, that they shall, after their own fashion, follow the precepts of Christ in ministering to those in prison. They are given the opportunity of doing some work for the help of unfortunate people, in their own way and without interference. They have no more reason for considering the views of other members than of the supporters of a hospital in which they may happen to be interested. To help the suffering is a broad enough creed for the LEAGUE; it needs and has no other.

The Living Dead Man Again

Letters from a Living Dead Man, written down by *Elsa Barker;* $1.35; loaned.

War Letters from the Living Dead Man, written down by *Elsa Barker;* $1.35; loaned.

Nearly two years ago there appeared a very remarkable book, *Letters from a Living Dead Man,* from the pen of Elsa Barker, a novelist of some repute, which has attracted wide attention. For the benefit of those who are not familiar with such things, it may be stated that Mrs. Barker did not claim to be the author of this book. It was the product of so-called automatic writing. Mrs. Barker simply took her pencil in hand and without the least conscious effort on her part, the hand wrote down what she has presented to the world. Strange, no doubt, but it is a well established fact that such writings do occur. Nobody who has taken the least trouble to inquire into the matter has the least doubt on the subject, and to pooh-pooh it, or ascribe it to fraud, is simply to proclaim oneself an ass.

What the explanation may be is a matter of opinion. It has been proved beyond question that such scripts often contain information which could not by any possibility have been in possession of the writer at the time. There are three theories to account for these writings. One is, that they originate in the writer's subconscious mind; another, that they are communicated telepathically from the mind of another living person; while the third claims boldly that they are just what they profess to be—communications from a departed spirit. It is established that the first two causes occur, often conjointly. In many cases the subconscious mind theory is insufficient, because the facts conveyed are such as the writer could not have known. In the present instance the writing began before Mrs. Barker knew of the death of the person, X, or Judge Hatch, who claimed to be the communicant. The assumption that they come from another living person through telepathic means is quite as mysterious as that they should proceed from a dead man. Unless one denies the survival of the soul after death one theory is quite as plausible as the other.

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Whatever the conclusion of the reader may be, the fact remains that these letters present an interesting scientific problem, while on the assumption that they are what they claim to be, the narrative of a dead man about his experiences after death, they have great value.

After a period of silence Judge Hatch, or in any event, X, began to write again through the hand of Mrs. Barker, and what was written we have in the second book, *War Letters from the Living Dead Man.*

Those who have read Mr. Sinnett's booklet, *The Spiritual Powers and the War* (see CRITIC of June 30th, 1915), will be struck by the great similarity in the ideas presented, which imply that the great war is being played out behind the scenes, in the "astral world," as well as in this. According to the Dead Man, it is in reality the result of forces being manipulated by discarnate beings, both good and bad. Our familiar and perfectly orthodox idea of the interference of the unseen world in the affairs of earth is carried out in considerable detail. It is the object of these forces, in as far as they are evil, to destroy the human race or at least to retard its progress, inspired by envy, hatred and malice—the spirit of the Satan of *Paradise Lost.*

While the letters are interesting reading, I cannot say that the Dead Man has made good his claim that "When I tell you the story of this war as seen from the other side, you will know more than all the chancelleries of the nations." While it is filled with incidents of interference by invisible intelligences, there is a decided lack of any clear and concise statement as to how the war was brought about, and of the part played by these beings and their motives. Much of this is left to inference. The Dead Man has largely abandoned his role of observer, which made the first volume so interesting, and has adopted that of preacher; he has used the incidents as pegs on which to hang an almost intolerable amount of preaching. This is sound, and one cannot object to it, but what one looks for in a book of this kind is not sermons, but a consistent philosophy of the war as worked out on the hypothesis of spiritual interference. In this he will be largely disappointed.

In the course of his journeyings up and down the lines, the Dead man meets with many interesting Beings, including the Archfiend himself, and his description of this magnificently evil gentleman is truly philosophical and illuminating. In one of the most interesting chapters he interviews Friedrich Nietzsche, and brings out in a most interesting way the truth that man does not become Superman by cultivation of Will or Power only: that Power, without Love, can at best make but a superior sort of Man-Devil. And in this, perhaps, is to be found the real philosophy of the war, among the causes of which one often hears the philosophy of Nietzsche mentioned. All of our scientific discoveries, our in-

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ventions, our education, can be used for evil ends, and must inevitably recoil on us just as long as we make self-aggrandizement the aim of life, rather than brotherhood and love. Cut out the telegraph, the telephone, the steam and gas engine, which have annihilated space and time and brought the peoples together, cut out the great mechanical and chemical discoveries which have made modern artillery and high explosives possible, and this war would have been but a petty squabble. It is science and invention which have made it possible on a huge scale. The Tree of Knowledge has borne evil fruit, not evil in itself, but evil because those who have eaten of it have had only love of self in their hearts. The race must inevitably destroy itself through its very progress, unless, *pari passu* with increasing knowledge, goes increasing altruism. It is but a short step for those who drop bombs on women and children, or who send them to the bottom of the ocean, to turn loose on their opponents swarms of pestilent microbes, to which science has introduced us, microbes cultivated wholesale as we today cultivate the yeast plant, and to annilate the population of whole regions. Knowledge is power for evil, quite as much as for good. It is this, perhaps, which has led the Dead Man to so much sermonizing.

More Prison Correspondents Urgently Needed

We have now at least 150 prisoners on the waiting list for correspondents. We ought to have one volunteer for each three prisoners; instead of this, we are getting ten or more requests for each offer of help. Will you not devote a little of your spare time to helping these men and women who need it? I am not romancing when I say that you will receive quite as much as you give.

One Way To Help The League

You are probably a book buyer, more or less. It is a fact, which has perhaps not occurred to you, that every book you buy through the LEAGUE probably makes at least one prisoner happy, and may change the whole course of his life for the better. The same is true of every subscription for the CRITIC which you send us.

A Business Man's Library

For sale, a set of the famous *Business Man's Library,* in ten volumes, published by System Magazine, $10.00 (price new, $29).

Contents: Vol. 1, Credits and Collections; Vol. 2, Business Correspondence; Vol. 3, Production Costs; Vol. 4, Selling; Vol. 5, Buying; Vol. 6, Factory Organization; Vol. 7, Advertising; Vol. 8, Handling Men; Vol. 9, Personality in Business; Vol. 10, Accounting and Office Methods.

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Important for Volunteer Prison Correspondents

In writing to prisoners, correspondents are specially cautioned not to indulge in criticism of the rules of the prison, of the officials, or of the laws of the State, and to refrain from religious discussions with inmates of such prisons as do not allow it. The officers of every prison are charged with carrying out the laws and enforcing the rules, and it is their duty to see that they are obeyed, not to amend them. As a rule these officials desire the good of their wards, and the best results can be accomplished by cooperating with them, not by criticizing or antagonizing. To attempt to argue the justness of a rule with the Warden or other official is quite out of place. If you desire to criticize—and there can be no question that some rules deserve to be criticized—you should address the Governor, the Prison Board, or whoever makes the rules, not the man who would be acting contrary to his duty, did he not enforce them.

The fact has been called to our attention that in many cases where prisoners do not reply to letters received, it is not from intentional neglect, but from sheer lack of money to pay for a postage stamp. Few prisoners are paid for their work; if they are it is not enough to get what can fairly be called necessities. It is suggested that correspondents inform themselves on this point. Stamps—not stamped envelopes—may be sent for reply.

It is our custom to send prisoners' letters to those who take up correspondence with them. We invariably request the return of these letters to the LEAGUE office within a reasonable time.

Notwithstanding this request not a few neglect to return them. We beg to call the attention of these to the fact that the letters, being addressed to us, are our property, and that in most cases they are confidential and constitute the only source of information we have, information which is frequently urgently needed.

We think that this notice should be sufficient to secure the return of all letters which are addressed to the LEAGUE or the Editor, without the necessity of a personal and special request.

Membership in The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired. No pledges or other obligations.

Elizabeth Towne Publications

Books written by Mrs. Towne or mothered by her. Also loaned unless otherwise stated.

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The Mastery of Being, $1.08.
Memory, How to Develop and Train, $1.08.
The Message of the New Thought, $0.25, sold only.
Mind and Body, or Mental States and Physical Conditions, $1.08.

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Ellsworth, Paul—Direct Healing, $1.10.
Latson, Dr. W. R. C.—Secrets of Mental Supremacy, $1.08.
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Militz, Annie Rix—The Renewal of the Body, $1.08.
Rhodes-Wallace, Helen—Psychcoma, or Soul Sleep, $1.08.
Religious Education for New Thought Children, paper, $0.50, sold only.
Rion, Roxana—The Beauty Book, $1.08.
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Happiness and Marriage, paper, $0.50.
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Warman, Edward B.—Psychic Science Made Plain. 2 vols., each, $1.25.
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Vol. 2; Suggestion, Clairvoyance, Hindu Yoga, Spiritism.
Wattles, Wallace D.—**The Science of Being Great, $1.08.**
The Science of Being Well, $1.08.
The Science of Getting Rich, $1.08.
The Nautilus Magazine, monthly, edited by Elizabeth Towne and William E Towne. The only New Thought periodical which has passed the age of puberty, being now in its seventeenth year. Subscription, $1.50 a year, through the O. E. Library.

Books By Rabindranath Tagore

sold and loaned by the Library.

Gitanjali (Song Offerings), $1.35.
The Crescent Moon (child poems), $1.35.
Sadhana; the Realization of Life, $1.35.
The Gardener, $1.35.
The King of the Dark Chamber, $1.35.
Chitra; a Play in one Act, sold only, $1.10.
Songs of Kabir, sold only, $1.35.
The Post Office, sold only, $1.10.
Biography of Rabindranath Tagore, by Ernest Rhys, sold only, $1.10.

All Kinds of Books

It is a mistake to suppose that we supply only the books on our lists. These are lists of books which we *lend* as well as sell. We are glad to fill orders for any books which are in print and try to secure copies of books which are out of print.

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V | Wednesday, December 1, 1915 | No. 8

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

OUR ARMY

Years ago, when a student in Germany, I lived across the street from the Caserne where the soldiers were trained. I watched the undisciplined recruit, a clumsy fellow with his muscles but half under control, whose reactions differed from those of his comrade by a large fraction of a second, who could not understand or obey the word of command, and I saw him gradually develop into a part of a machine every unit of which had itself perfectly under control and which acted as one man. I have never had a doubt that the rapid industrial development of Germany is largely to be attributed to this training in efficiency, in self-mastery, which every male citizen is required to undergo. Efficiency and self-mastery are broad subjects. Control of one's legs may not make a good piano player or surgeon, but the fact remains that military discipline is one of the best general bases for efficiency that it is possible to imagine. The trained soldier is by so much ahead of him who has always been used to think that a moment or an inch more or less count for nothing.

Personally I am in favor of universal military service for the United States, not because I believe in militarism, but because I consider the control of the body afforded by military drill quite as important as any branch taught in our public schools. Further, I believe that every American, from the richest to the poorest, should know how to handle a gun, and to shoot it in defense of his country. I believe that personal service is quite as much a duty as the payment of taxes, and I would excuse no one, or practically no one, from training, who is within the limits of age during which he might be called on for duty. I do not sympathize with those who think that the country would suffer economically from a system such as that in vogue in Switzerland, where every man has to devote a portion of his time to keeping in a state of military efficiency. As well argue against wasting time in schools or in vacations. Military discipline would be just as valuable, even were universal peace irrevocably established, and as things are now, it means that we shall not be placed in the position of having to indulge in "protests" when our rights or our national dignity are trampled on, and

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we ourselves attacked. It is quite incomprehensible that he who believes the Nation worth preserving should go about with excuses for avoiding his individual responsibility as a unit, on the assumption that we are fire and bomb proof, or that we can outwit or pacify our enemies, and especially when what is demanded is such beneficial training as military service.

The standing army of the United States consists at present of about 90,000 men. The proposition is now to train a volunteer army of say 400,000. These men are to be withdrawn from civil pursuits for say two months a year for a series of years. Whether this will put them at a disadvantage with respect to those who prefer Atlantic City or the backwoods as a place for vacation, I do not undertake to say, nor do I ask whether the additional month or six weeks spent in rigorous physical training will not be to their advantage as well as to that of their employers. We are learning to adapt ourselves to the eight-hour and child-labor laws and the minimum wage, which we declared would ruin us, and are so much the better off. Why should this not be the case with universal military service? We have heard of the European nations "groaning" under their military burden. The fact is, they would have "groaned" anyway; it is the nature of man to groan. When he does not groan over energy wasted in armaments, he will groan over waste in more peaceful directions. Which has cost Russia the more, guns or vodka?

What I have in mind at present, however, is another army which presents one of the most serious problems with which we have to deal. It costs us millions upon millions to recruit this army, and when we have it we do nothing with it; we do worse than not train it. Has it occurred to you that the penal institutions of this country contain a standing army of 150,000 men, and that some 500,000 are said to spend a portion of the year in prison or workhouse? What is being done with these men? Many of them are being employed, many are not, but in any event the standard of efficiency is very low, because of slave labor, living in insanitary cells, lack of suitable recreation and training, and largely because of the fact, which accounts for their being where they are, that they have been badly brought up. These men need discipline, and they get discipline, such as it is, a discipline which fits them for nothing, which often embitters and degrades rather than elevates. Did you ever see a convict leave the prison with the firm step and erect bearing of the soldier? I guess not, and you never will under the present system.

I am not suggesting that the proposed army shall be made up of convicts. But the convict is quite as likely to love his country as the free citizen, and would fight for it on occasion and welcome the opportunity. Without doubt many of these men could not be safely set at liberty, even such liberty as exists in an army in camp or field, but they are not all bums and cutthroats. Most of

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them have gone wrong through force of circumstances, through lack of self-control, or ignorance of the way to live right. On the average they have in them the material which would be requisite in the recruit.

In the large majority of cases it would be entirely safe to offer the convict the option of volunteering in the army in exchange for his parole. The limited freedom of military life would be the very best thing with which to follow up the restriction of prison life. It would give him temporary employment, which is now so hard to find and the lack of which is the cause of so much recidivism. Under our present laws, I suppose, it would be impossible for a man to be paroled into the army, but why not make it possible? Why not give him this one chance more to make good? Why not, perhaps, make a period of military service obligatory, in the absence of other employment?

I believe that a valuable step in the direction of "preparedness" would be to introduce genuine military training into all of our penal institutions, from workhouse to penitentiary. The necessary number of military officers could be detailed to each prison, and a portion of the inmate's time devoted to military drill. There can hardly be a question that it would improve the morale of the men. I have often enough called attention to the fact that the man in prison differs from him without only in being temporarily or permanently deprived of freedom for the safety of society and for his own reform. To train him in efficiency, to turn him from a foe of society into its protector, that would be an ideal aim; it would be recruiting this great army of convicts to some purpose. And from the economic standpoint the loss to the community in the form of prison labor would be no more than it would be in the case of the freeman.

A plan such as this would necessarily be experimental, but it could easily be tried out in single states, or in the United States Penitentiaries, and in the latter case nothing more than an act of Congress would be requisite to put it in operation.

Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 183 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: Atlanta, Georgia, U. S. Penitentiary, 18; California, Folsom, 52; California, San Quentin, 2; Leavenworth, Kansas, U. S. Penitentiary, 34; Maine, 26; Montana, 14; New York, Clinton, 2; New York, Sing Sing, 13; New York, Women's Prison, 10; Nevada, 1; Oregon, 1; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary, 10.

In addition we have a considerable number who have been disappointed by members who have not kept their promise to write.

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Criminal and Pauper

Speaking editorially, *McClure's* for November indulges in a lament over the supposed fact that while the criminal is being treated to vaudeville shows, lectures and concerts, and is being petted generally, nobody thinks of the honest pauper. *He* is left to shift for himself, or at most provided with the barest necessities of life. The writer takes it much to heart that so much interest is shown in the wicked, while the righteous are forsaken and neglected, and suggests that "the time has come to disinter the ten commandments and moderate our sympathy for sin."

Acting on this advice I have "disinterred the ten commandments" and fail to find any prohibition of interest in sinners. I have also dug up the New Testament, and find that one Jesus, regarded by some as almost as great an ethical authority as the editor of *McClure's,* specially commends those who minister to prisoners. and strongly hints that they who neglect this duty will stand a relatively poor show on the Day of Reckoning.

But apart from a question of authority between Christ and the editor of a popular magazine, is it a fact that the prisoner receives more attention? He has his own band, he provides his own amusements with occasional help from without; the state pays for about all he gets and makes him work for it. The pauper has open to him the churches, where lectures and music are free to those who want to listen. Organizations without end, a new one almost every day, to say nothing of legislatures, are working to ameliorate the condition of the poor. Education is free; his children get free lunches and free medical service; the settlement houses invite him. the sanitary inspectors are on the watch, and if he does not claim his share of public attention—and he gets infinitely more than the prisoner—it is because he is too busy at the saloon and with the "day after day." Sympathy with sinners is no more sympathy with sin than is sympathy with paupers sympathy with poverty, or interest in a tuberculous patient a partiality for microbes. Christ was a pretty clear thinker, and never fell into the ridiculous confusion of thought, to say nothing of ignorance of facts, which the editorial writer in *McClure's* shows.

A Prisoner's Tribute to the League

Dr. H. N. Stokes Nov. 1, 1915.

My Dear Sir:—

* * * You have never heard of me before and of course you are wondering by this time how I came to know so much about your work, and by way of introduction I desire to say that I am a prisoner here and am filling the capacity of an instructor in the prison school. This work brings me in touch with a great number of men and even though I am a young man myself, I feel a certain gladness in the fact that during the short time I have been here,

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a great number of men have seen fit to confide in me their many trials and troubles, seeking from me such advice as I may be able to give them upon matters concerning their welfare. It is through this intercourse of confidence that I have been shown a number of letters which have been received by them and really, Dr. Stokes, tears would come to your eyes if you could be here personally to witness the emotion and the feeling of gratitude which these poor men show whenever a letter from one of your noble correspondents is received. Many of them who are receiving letters have been here for years during which time they have been entirely forgotten by their friends and relatives and many, when they read these beautiful letters, can scarcely believe that after all there is someone outside "that cares."

The effect upon the man himself is really marvellous. If he has been going along in a sort of semi-lethargic state, deadened by the unchanging routine of the prison, he suddenly changes his whole view point of life and after having received one of these letters his whole being appears to take on a cloak of optimism and the spark of hope which through many years of stultification has become almost extinct, is suddenly fanned into a living flame of aspiration through the magic influence of some kindly words from someone who is far distant and whom he has never seen. To me it is very wonderful." * * *

Most sincerely yours,

H———— A————

One Way to Help the League

You are probably a book buyer, more or less. It is a fact, which has perhaps not occurred to you, that every book you buy through the LEAGUE probably makes at least one prisoner happy, and may change the whole course of his life for the better. The same is true of every subscription for the CRITIC which you send us.

The League and Religious Matters

While the LEAGUE does not represent any set of religious opinions, and does not engage in propaganda, and while no questions are ever asked of its members, it often happens that both volunteers and prisoners have some preference. Any information of this kind will be recorded, and while treated as confidential, will be utilized when possible in bringing prisoners and volunteers together.

Caution About Address

Owing to the loss of a number of letters recently, because of faulty address, we request our friends to be careful to see that the street address, 1207 Q Street, N. W., is distinctly written. It would also be well to place the name of H. N. Stokes on the envelope.

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Letter From A Prisoner

Dr. Stokes Nov. 7, 1915.
Dear Sir:—

I am an inmate of the Federal Prison, and like lots of others the outside world has forsaken me. I have no one to write me a line but Mother and she has a hard time to get someone to write for her. At times I feel like Mother has forsaken me, it's such a long time between letters that I receive from her. So I thought I would write you a letter asking if you know of anyone that would like to write to a poor fellow like me. Sir, you don't know how blue it makes a fellow feel when all the boys around you gets mail and you nothing, but when the table turns and you get one, *to me*, it makes a fellow feel like he has more courage to do his time. My time is so long that I have no hope of ever leaving these walls, so you may know that I am lonely. If you can do anything for me, I will be forever grateful for your kindness.

Yours respectfully,

T——— N———

Notice to Prison Members

We should be glad to acknowledge the receipt of applications from prisoners by return mail, but the great pressure on our time and means forbids it. Every prisoner who has asked for a correspondent may, however, be assured that his application will be recorded at once and that he will hear from us at the earliest moment when his request can be complied with. This depends largely on the number of volunteers we secure, and this is a matter beyond our control. Repeated requests and impatient letters can not make us do more than lies within the limits of possibility, and harsh comments are only discouraging to the Editor. In general applications are met in the order in which they are received, but preference is frequently given to those who write personal letters, for the reason that they aid us in selecting correspondents. It might be added for the benefit of a few applicants that this is not a Marriage Bureau. and that any attempt to use it as such will result in the applicant being dropped from the roll at once.

Special Volunteer Prison Correspondents Wanted

For a Lithuanian Prisoner—One who can write Lithuanian or Lettish.

For a Montenegrin Prisoner—One who can write Serb or Montenegrin.

For Italian Prisoners—Those who can write Italian, preferably native Italian.

For Negro Prisoners—Correspondents who believe that "broth-

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erhood without distinction of race, creed, caste or color" means *black*, as well as white, yellow and red.

For Prisoners interested in Agriculture—Such as have a practical knowledge of agricultural topics. Mention specialties.

Intelligent and educated colored people, men or women, who are willing to correspond with prisoners of their own race.

For Jewish and Roman Catholic Prisoners—Correspondents of these faiths.

For Mexican Prisoners—Correspondents who can write Spanish. Those who can give elementary instruction in English also desired.

For Prisoners interested in Law—Legal correspondents.

For Prisoners interested in Painting, Drawing, etc.—Correspondents proficient in these arts.

For Prisoners musically inclined—Musical correspondents. especially those familiar with band instruments.

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

Theosophy; Occultism; New Thought; Religion; Philosophy

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How to Be a Yogi, .65 (new, 1.08).
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Bulliett, Mrs.—The Philosophy of Numbers, 1.05 (new, 1.50).

Bean, B. C.—How to Persuade and Convince, .65 (new, 1.00).
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Begbie, Harold—Souls in Action, .50 (new, 1.25).

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SURGERY AND SIN

It was once, and for aught I know, may still be a favorite theory with certain theologians that a portion of the community is predestined to be damned. There is no way of helping it; it is the will of God, and damned you must be. And this theory finds its scientific counterpart in the belief of a school of criminologists that there are those born with a criminal tendency; brought into the world to be sinners, with practically no escape from the inevitable result. Lombroso, religionized, would have been a good Presbyterian of the old school.

When you have time for meditation you might ponder over the question how far one born with a physically abnormal body which reacts on the mind, is morally responsible for his acts? Will he who has the misfortune to be a criminal because a brick has made a dent in his skull be condemned to hell therefor? Do the sins of the parents exclude the defective children from all participation in the company of the elect?

It is said that the ways of the Lord are beyond all understanding. We might add that the same is true of our own ways. We have long been demanding a reasonable God, one who will be easy on us and give us a chance, but we are still pursuing our old path of unreason, damning as far as it is in our power to do so, those who are sinners through no fault of their own, placing them on a parity with those who have it put fairly and squarely up to them whether they will follow the righthand or the lefthand path, with full knowledge of the results and with full ability to choose the right if they wish.

What judge inquires into the heredity of the malefactor hailed before him? All are grist for the judicial mill; into the same hopper they go, and into the same prison they are cast, unless, indeed, they have the money wherewith to escape. Only now and then one gets the chance to prove that he is "insane" and so to be shunted off to the asylum; and that, too, is largely a matter of funds.

If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; if thy tooth ache, jerk it out by the roots—this is the rough and ready method of primitive, or what one may call destructive surgery. Surgical operations as a

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remedy for crime are nothing new. For a long time we have been accustomed to resort to a peculiar surgical operation for the prevention of murder. It bears a resemblance to the operation for setting a dislocated limb. A rope is placed about the neck of the patient and through the agency of a sudden jerk he is permanently cured of all desire to commit murder. The operation is simple and effective; it calls for no apparatus or instrument other than a common carpenter can make, and the operator does not need a certificate from a medical college—any fellow will do. The cheapness of the process, and its effectiveness as far as the patient is concerned still appeal to a large portion of the community; it has even been supported by popular vote in some states. Electricity, long used as a curative agent, has also found its way into penology. It is said that a single treatment is certain to enforce obedience to the Sixth Commandment.

With the development of surgical skill, aided by improved methods of diagnosis, by increased pathological knowledge and by better antiseptic methods, destructive surgery has largely given place to remedial surgery, which aims to restore the body to its normal condition of health and wholeness. The normal body is a machine in which the functions of the various organs are so adjusted as to produce normal results. There is not only cooperation between the organs, but in some cases there is opposition. There are glands which produce chemicals which would be poisons, were they not offset by other chemicals secreted by other glands. Let one of these, for instance, be overgrown, and the entire character of the individual is changed for the worse. Excision of a portion of the overgrown or obstreperous gland, and consequent restraint of its activity, results in restoration of normality. Let another gland be stunted, and other disastrous results follow, which can be remedied by administering the secretion of that gland obtained from an animal. How many of us would be irritable dyspeptics were it not that we digest our daily meat with the aid of pepsin furnished by the stomach of a pig or an ox. Whatever the soul may be, it depends largely for its normal activity on purely physical and chemical processes entirely beyond the control of our will.

There are cases on record where an accident resulting in the loss of a portion of the brain has converted an imbecile into a man of fair intelligence. On the other hand it has long been known that pressure on the brain, caused by a slight crushing in of the skull, by thickening of the bony plates, or by tumorous growths, leads to abnormal mental and moral effects of a variety of kinds. These abnormal tendencies may or may not be those which we call criminal; frequently they are. Without doubt criminal tendencies may be produced by abnormal conditions in other parts of the body, which may be remedied by a surgical operation.

Being but a layman, it is quite beyond my ability or province to discuss in detail the subject of surgical operation for crime, but

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it must be admitted that the matter has advanced to the point where it is certain that in some cases a bad man may be made into a good man by what is a purely mechanical process. Stated baldly, the New Salvation is Salvation by Surgery; the man with the trephine takes the place of the Vicarious Atonement. Incidentally it is to be hoped that in many cases he may also replace the hangman. He rescues those whom society would have consigned to prison or the church to perdition; he turns a sinner into a fair sort of saint. Recently I expressed my opinion of the proposed sexual sterilization of defectives. This policy belongs to the old order of things; it is destructive as far as the individual is concerned; it does not claim to restore him to normality. Quite the contrary with the surgery of which I am now speaking; its aim is not to make the man less a man, but more so.

Has the state the right to enforce such an operation on a convict without his consent? Must it be left to him to decide whether he shall remain a defective or run the risk of an operation?

All progress is through experiment. Surgery is an art based on experiment and guided by diagnosis. At the outset somebody has to be experimented on, else there would be no progress. The risk of starting a policy of operating on criminals does not lie in the fact of the operation, compulsory or not, but in the danger that the convict may be singled out as a subject for experiment. He is not, as a rule, responsible for his physical defect where such exists, and it would be the sheerest injustice to make him a special subject on which to demonstrate theories. No operation should be allowed which would not be considered reasonable and justifiable in the case of a free man. We have had scientific men who have proposed seriously that the convict be turned over for experiments, just as we experiment on cats, dogs and rabbits. This is nothing short of criminal, and the danger is that these scientific criminals shall get the ear of the authorities. It should be insisted that no operation be performed except on the basis of a thorough diagnosis by experts and operators of the highest order. Anybody can hang a man, but those who can decide upon and perform a serious operation are few. To leave the decision and execution of such matters to prison or court doctors would be preposterous. Further, I would insist on full publicity as regards the results. I do not mean newspaper publicity, but that they should be required to be reported to a competent medical board or society, just as a private operation of the same nature should be—no hustling off of a corpse secretly just because the man was a convict. In short, I would lay aside the fact entirely that the patient is in the hands of the law and treat him rather as one would treat a sick child.

Dr. Northrup, of the Hahnemann Hospital in Philadelphia, claims that in seventy per cent of the cases operated on by him the criminal tendencies have been entirely removed. That is already a wonderful

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showing, considering the fact that in the failures other causes in addition to brain pressure may have existed. There is great hope in the future of surgical treatment of criminals, while one must not forget that in their enthusiasm scientists may look on it as almost a panacea, and use it without duly inquiring whether the evil tendency may not be due to an entirely different ceause. When it is admitted that eighty per cent of the offenders attribute their downfall to alcohol, directly or indirectly, it requires no expert diagnostician to determine on a surgical operation of a very different character, the excision from society of the dealer in alcoholic drinks. Once admit that we are justified in confining a man, and if need be, operating on him in order to protect our purses and our hides, certainly no considerations of individual liberty or "personal rights" should stand in the way of dealing summarily with a traffic which taxes us hundreds of millions a year in the effort to defend ourselves. But that is another question.

Clerical Help Wanted

The LEAGUE desires to secure the voluntary aid of a few of its members who are expert typists, or who are exceptionally good letter writers, who will offer to relieve the congestion in this office by writing form letters, answering letters on their own initiative, etc. This is exclusively in connection with prison work. It is not intended to ask an amount of work which will interfere with other duties, but only such are desired as can be counted on to do what they undertake systematically and promptly. Those living within a day's mailing distance of Washington are preferred, but there is work for others. Where the nature of the work demands it we will supply letterheads and other stationery, and if desired, pay postage for mailing.

Bricks Without Straw

Dear Fellow Member:—

I have your letter, filled to the brim with kindly expressions and good wishes, to say nothing of numerous questions, and enclosing ten cents registration fee and a twenty-five cent subscription to the CRITIC. You ask what is demanded of members.

What is demanded is one thing, what is desired is another. We have not insisted on a dollar or a three or five dollar membership fee, as so many philanthropic organizations do, because we want to give everybody a chance to work. The LEAGUE accepts members on the trifling consideration of ten cents and a subscription, because it knows that some of the best people in the world are poor, and that service is not limited to the rich. But it is obvious that somebody must pay the costs. Perhaps you think that we have some nabob behind us to foot the bills, but it is not so. It is said that

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"they also serve who only stand and wait," but whatever the inner meaning of the phrase, it does not apply to an active organization like the LEAGUE. I do not think I would serve its cause by standing and waiting, nor do I want you to do so. So let me present some hard facts.

Expressions of good will, and the ardent desire that someone else will step forward with the cash are always welcome, especially when one is not too busy to read them. But however gratifying to one's *amour propre,* it is a patent fact that good will does not pay the rent, it does not pay the printer's bill, it does not pay the stenographer who writes this letter, the clerk who makes record of your name and who files away your letter so that we can get it out and read it when we feel blue, nor does it even pay the postage on this communication.

Your twenty-five cent subscription just about pays the cost of the CRITIC sent to you; it does not pay for the copies sent to prison members, nor to others, in the hope of interesting them in our work. The ten cents registration fee just about pays what it says, recording your name with such data as you have given us. You have asked for the names of two prisoners. You may think that these names came to us without cost—far from it. It has indirectly cost a heap of work to get these men wakened up to the point where they want your help; they, too, have to be registered as you have been, but they do not pay for it. It costs about ten cents for each letter written, including postage, stationery and clerical work—stenographers do not work for nothing. Besides this letter to you, each prisoner must be notified that he will hear from you as a member of the LEAGUE. That is, just to start you off costs us about sixty cents, to say nothing of answering letters which you or the prisoners may write to us later. Do you see how far your ten cents registration fee goes? And how about the rent? How about the copies of the CRITIC which make the LEAGUE work possible, and the bill about which the printer is kicking? In short, it is a fact that but few members pay as much as they actually cost the LEAGUE, to say nothing of the prisoners who pay nothing.

Frankly, I want to ask your help in a more material way. I want to ask you to contribute something monthly, or if not, then occasionally, which will at least cover your *pro rata* portion of the expense of carrying on this work. Contributions towards expansion, towards taking up new lines of prison work may be left to those who are more well-to-do than yourself, but do not go to bed without knowing that you are carrying your fair share of the costs. Your desire to help the prisoners is laudable, but if in any way possible, even at the cost of a little self-denial, bear your share of our expenses with some margin for expansion. Do not be content to use the tools which someone else has forged and placed in your hands. Do not assume, which is so easy, that someone else will step forward and pay that share for you; do not say that "somebody else

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will, so I will not." We are glad to have you ask questions, but when you are inclined to reproach us because your letters do not get answered promptly, don't spend your time in thinking how careless we are, but ask yourself "Am I doing my fair share towards making the LEAGUE's work possible, or am I expecting it to make bricks without straw?"

THE EDITOR.

A Fetching Letter

Below is a copy of a letter which one of our members wrote to a New York daily, the result of which was to bring a considerable number of ardent prison workers into the LEAGUE. In view of this fact I think it would be a help to our prison work if you would send a copy of this letter, or at least something closely similar, to the newspapers of your city or district, or to religious papers. You could not choose a more taking caption than "Who Will Write to a Prisoner?" If you care to send to several it would be well to have an interval of time between them. Our facilities for answering inquiries are limited.

Who Will Write to a Prisoner?

Editor of The ————————: Sir—Ours is a generous hearted country and the sympathy of our people is easily aroused when causes of distress are made known to them, giving abundantly of their dollars.

There is a form of distress to which few give a thought and for which I am asking something far more subtle than money. I am appealing in the cause of friendless prisoners to whom a word of sympathy and hope is more than all the dollars in the world. Every one knows how the so-called friends depart at the first sound of reverses and how quickly the world turns up its nose. Friends are good in prosperity, but who has not known the far greater value of a friend in adversity?

Who will be that agent of mercy and correspond with some of these friendless ones? Many today are earnestly asking for correspondents. Their names may be obtained from Dr. H. N. Stokes, The O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Important for Prison Correspondents

If you are unable to write to a prisoner whose name has been sent to you, do not under any circumstances turn him over to "a friend." The LEAGUE has on more than one occasion had to shoulder the blame for injudicious letters coming from non-members in this way. If you cannot write yourself, return the name to us so that another member can be assigned. The LEAGUE is compelled in self-defense distinctly to disavow all correspondence of this nature. Prisoners, and if necessary officials will be informed that the transfer was made without our knowledge and that we disclaim all responsibility for it. The LEAGUE can accept responsibility for its members only, and your friend should join as a preliminary to taking up correspondence.

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To Prison Members of the League

The Editor of the CRITIC wishes each and all of you a very Merry Christmas. He wishes he could write a personal letter to each of you but that is impossible. He also wishes he could join with you at your Christmas dinner. Should you turn a thought in his direction on that day, you may think of him, not as engaged in feasting or recreation, but as sitting alone in his den, clicking the typewriter in your behalf. That he may be able to bring a little more joy into your lives, a little more hope, this is his one aim and wish. Good luck to all of you, Boys.

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

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THE REPEATER

The "repeater," or to use a more scientific but less expressive word, the recidivist, is one who backslides, who commits a crime after having been punished for a previous offense.

To understand fully the causes of recidivism, to know why he who has been punished goes and does the same thing over, would mean that you and I would have to put ourselves in the place of the man who does so. It means that we should have to see things not through the eyes of one man only, but of a great variety of men. The poet—Burns, wasn't it?—wished that some power would give us the gift of seeing ourselves as others see us. It would have been worse poetry, but better sense to have wished that others might see us as we see ourselves. Half of the mistakes, the misery, the cruelty which are going on all the time come from our insistence on our own standpoint with regards to others, instead of putting ourselves in their place. You know, doubtless, that the successful teacher is not he who beats his pupils and constantly impresses on them the fact that they are fools, but he who sees their difficulties and meets them with the proper course of treatment. The success of the great teacher, Christ, was due to His knowing how to see others as they saw themselves. Had He started out on the principle that they should see themselves as others saw them He would not have made a single convert.

And then there is the power of suggestion. If you constantly tell the child that he is stupid, sooner or later he will take you at your word and give up effort. If you persist in treating a man as a criminal, you are on a fair way to making him more criminal than before. For centuries the Church has dinged in our ears that we are miserable sinners. Has it made anybody better? On the contrary, it has afforded an excuse for sinning the more.

Have you ever noticed the cur that has been kicked and cuffed about? Have you observed his cringing, sneaking ways? If you treat a man in the same way, he ultimately either becomes hangdog, or else turns on you and bites you. It matters little whether he is in prison or out. Our old prison system—nothing better could have

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been devised for making a man into a beast, and an honest man into a criminal. Either he lost all spirit or he became imbued with the spirit of revenge.

It is said that about 40 per cent of the men discharged from prison find their way back. It matters little whether it is 35 or 45 per cent. It may look bad for the convict, but it really looks worse for those who have him in charge and for society which receives him after his liberation. Nobody will deny that there are those who care nothing for right and wrong in the accepted meaning of the terms, who are inclined to treat the world as their oyster and to disregard the rules of the game which one must observe if he would keep out of prison. These are in the minority.

The average person speaks of every kind of insect as a "bug." So, too, he speaks of every man who has been in prison as a criminal. The law, the prison rules and public opinion are made in the same way; all are treated alike. And the common assumption is that he who commits an offense twice is worse than he who offends but once, and deserves more stringent treatment. This, too, is without doubt often true, but often it is not; yet all have to suffer alike.

Why does a man become a repeater? I am leaving out of account the incorrigibles, who ought no more to be let loose than the man still suffering from a disease should be discharged from the hospital. There are several reasons why a discharged or paroled man, not necessarily bad, and who would like to behave if he could, falls again into the meshes of the law. I am not making an exhaustive analysis of recidivism, but I want to call your attention to a few of the leading reasons.

Very generally he who is let out on parole is required to take a pledge to abstain from intoxicating drinks and to avoid bad company. We all know what the alcohol habit is, even when one resorts to a drink just to drive away care for the time. What we do is to extract a pledge not to drink, and then hold the stuff under his nose at the very time of all his life when he is most likely to be downcast. And as for bad company—well! man is a social being. If he cannot find good friends he will find bad ones. We shun the discharged convict and then blame him if he seeks to satisfy his perfectly justifiable desire for companionship. And with that begins the drink, the gambling or what not. You wouldn't deny him friends, would you? Well then, if you refuse to be that friend, why blame him? Just admit that in the eyes of a Higher Justice, you are as much to blame, and in a much meaner way, as those whom the police run in with him.

We talk a lot about the returned prodigal, but the fact is that not one of us will kill the fatted calf, or even sacrifice a chicken for him. We say, or at least imply "once a criminal, always a criminal." It is perhaps demanding something to ask one to trust a man

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who has been a thief, but the penalty we pay for distrusting him is to make him a thief once more. We will not employ him, hence he must help himself as best he can. It is my observation that most discharged men are dreadfully afraid that their past will become known. We talk about the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, but our attitude is anything but angelic. We are glad that the fellow has repented, but we want him to keep out of our way. Now and then some liberal minded person is willing to employ a discharged convict, but even then the man is on pins and needles lest his past be discovered by others and he be boycotted.

Very generally the police follow up an "ex-con" and make it impossible for him to get a living by warning people against him. It ought to be, and I believe in some places is, an offense for a policeman or detective to give such information. After the convict has been discharged he should have the full protection of the law, and any attempt on the part of police or detectives to defame him should be treated as such things are in other cases. Now and then he is made the victim of blackmail by others who have known him in prison.

The only real remedy is education of public opinion. There is no sentimentality about it. The discharged man has paid his debt and is entitled to a receipt in full. But as long as this is not the case and he is likely to be compelled to move on, so long is he likely to face the dilemma of either going wrong or starving, or at any rate to seek the society of those who are not so squeamish and who are likely to lead him back into his old ways. The more we endeavor to see the man as he sees himself, so much the less likely is he to backslide. The education of public opinion, and that sympathy with the convict which some editors are never tired of berating, either in English or billingsgate, according to the cut of their minds, is destined to become one of the chief factors in reducing recidivism.

Another prolific source of recidivism is the fact that until recent times no attention whatever has been paid to preparing the convict for discharge. The prisons have given him no education, no training in trades of any kind which he could use, or if they have, there has been no effort to find him employment on release. True, some of the parole laws have a provision that the paroled man must have a "first friend" who will either employ him or find him employment. How, please, is he who has spent some years in prison and who has, as is generally the case, been forgotten or cast off by all of his friends who are not of questionable character themselves, to find such a "first friend?" How can it be demanded of him to trot forth such a sponsor when the state itself allows him to write but one letter a month, or perhaps one a week? I personally know many men who are being kept in prison when eligible for parole, simply because they can find no one to vouch for them. This first

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friend business is a makeshift; it throws on private individuals what it should be the duty of the state itself to assume. Unless the man has been able to make satisfactory arrangements, it should assume the guarantee itself and find employment. I suggested recently that enlistment in the Army and Navy would in many cases be an excellent stepping stone to something else, and would have the advantage of keeping him under a certain degree of discipline for a time. But what do we see? Recently a man convicted of chicken stealing was given by the judge the option of either going to prison or enlisting in the Navy; whereupon the Secretary of the Navy declared that he would allow no criminals on any of his ships. Why not? If a man steals chickens because he is hungry, does that make him any the less efficient as a seaman or gunner? Does the United States Navy require proof from every man who enlists that he would rather starve than steal?

A word to our members. A prison, if properly conducted, is a place where good resolutions are easily made and easily kept. While luxuries are not provided the inmate is at least sure of board, lodging, clothes and freedom from anxiety. You have doubtless noticed that most of these men are proposing to lead upright lives. In this they are usually sincere. But remember how it is when your prisoner friend has to face the world with a five dollar bill and not even a change of clothing, with perhaps no prospect of steady employment. You will then see that it is not while he is in prison, but just following his emergence, that he is most in need of help. It may not be in your power to afford material assistance, but you can at least offer encouragement; you can do something to help him to keep out of harm's way, to bear the discouragement, the setbacks, the hostility which he is likely to meet. You will therefore make an effort to continue in touch with him until he has at least set his feet well on the path toward success. This is a responsibility you cannot well shirk. On your attitude during this critical period may depend his fate; whether he shall go forward, or slip back to old ways, old companions, and finally serve another term which may mean a life as a confirmed offender. You may not be able to fill the requirement of a first friend according to the parole law, but at least you can be a first friend in another way. To have turned but one person into right ways, to have given the moral support needed at the time, should, I think, be a source of great gratification.

The LEAGUE *positively declines* to give the names of prisoners to any but its members, or to forward letters from non-members sent to it for transmission to prisoners.

Members will please bear in mind that it is a breach of confidence to give the names of prisoners sent to them from this office to anyone, without first consulting us.

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Christmas Message To Prisoners

From F. Emory Lyon, *Superintendent of The Central Howard Association*

A message of peace and good will in time of war seems a contradiction. Months of hatred and human slaughter finds us unreconciled to the conflict. All good Americans are praying that we be spared any such tragedy from outward foes. Our President warns us, however, that internal enemies may be as injurious.

It is a time therefore to pray for deliverance from life-long warfare within. On the battlefield of temptation are the opposing armies of differing ideals in each one of us. Here is a conflict, not between machinery and quivering flesh, but between what we would be at our best, and what we are at our worst.

My Christmas message to you this year, therefore, is a personal one to all prisoners of courage and purpose. It is a letter to those thousands who have written me during the past year for aid and encouragement. You have called me "Friend," and I prize this more than any other title. As friend of the prisoner and Superintendent of the Central Howard Association, I welcome the confidence of other thousands who are making the fight for a new start.

The success of the hundreds who have come to our doors in the past twelve months gives assurance that none need abandon the battle. It is your warfare and mine, with the aid of each other and the higher powers. We have it on the authority of one who has met the foe face to face!—"There is no greater conquest than that of self; no other victory so splendid as living today better than we lived yesterday. If we did not do ourselves full credit yesterday, so much the greater need of doing better today."

But life is not all battle. Fortunately we are a peace loving people, and we seek the fruits of peaceful pursuits. It is from this standpoint that I covet your higher achievement in the future. After self-mastery comes self-discovery.

I am thinking of what might be accomplished in the coming year by the one hundred and fifty thousand men behind prison walls. Think of what might be done by the best use of the brains, the muscle, the skill and the talent of this dynamo of human energy.

Shall this resource continue to be misdirected or wasted in idle dreams of ease and dissipation? That is a question for each of you to answer by high purpose and honest industry. The public may be skeptical and indifferent. But all who believe in you would point to your possibilities, and bid you seize each opportunity for a better life and greater service.

Do you know that your united effort could cultivate a fallow state, or build a ship canal, or produce health and happiness for millions of the needy and distracted. To realize this dream of

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greater usefulness, there is needed the insight of self-discovery, and complete command of all our powers.

Let self-mastery and self-discovery, then, be our mottoes. The greatest of Anglo-Saxon words is the verb control. More and more opportunity waits on merit. The biggest chances for success come to those who are best prepared. Increasingly the world is at the feet of him who is in command of the situation. Achievement is not an accident but the fulfillment of a law.

The merit system is growing in favor, in government, in industry, in prisons and reformatories. Only the few gain temporary advantage by means of selfish and personal favoritism.

It is time to get in line with the majority forces working for righteousness. Let the Central Howard help you at this Christmas time, and in the coming year. Write me of your past and your plans. Any service we can render for your future welfare will be freely and gladly given.

1245 Monon Bldg.,
Chicago, Illinois.

Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 171 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: U. S. Penitentiary, Atlanta, 19; Georgia State Penitentiary, 1; California, Folsom, 43; California, San Quentin, 1; California, Alcatraz Military Prison, 1; U. S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, 24; Maine, 21; Missouri 1; Montana, 13; Nevada, 1; New York, Sing Sing, 15; Womens Prison, 12; Oregon, 1; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary, 7; Texas, 2; Vermont, 1; Washington, 5.

In addition we have many who have been disappointed by members who have not kept their promise to write or who require additional correspondents.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....
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Please enroll me as a member of THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE.
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State whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss
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Best Books For Prison Workers

Everybody interested in prison work and problems should read:
Donald Lowrie; My Life in Prison ($1.35).
Thomas Mott Osborne; Within Prison Walls ($1.65).
Winifred Louise Taylor; The Man Behind the Bars ($1.60).
A. P. L. Field; The Story of Canada Blackie ($1.10).

Any of these may be rented or bought from the Library.
Ask for our list of books on prisons and prisoners.

Our Goat

What "gets our goat" is the fact that many who write to us appear to think that a two cent stamp, or at best a ten-cent registration fee, will cover the cost of unlimited correspondence with this office.

Some Cheap Books

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Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

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THE FEDERAL PAROLE LAW

The Federal Parole Law applies to the inmates of Federal prisons, and to Federal convicts who have been farmed out to state institutions. Federal prisoners are such as have been convicted in United States courts for offenses against United States laws. As such, everything concerning them, among other things, the law under which they may be paroled, is not an affair of a certain group of people, citizens of a certain state, but it concerns every citizen of the Nation. The law is made by Congress, and it is your right and your duty, if you have pronounced opinions on the subject, to express your convictions to your representative in Congress, and especially at a time like the present, when an amendment is being proposed.

The Federal Parole Law, as it stands at present, is too long a document to be reproduced in our limited space, but anyone who is interested can obtain a copy free by addressing the Department of Justice in Washington. When you have received your copy you will learn some interesting facts.

Foremost of all, you will learn that while there is a Parole Board, composed of men who are supposed to be in a position to judge impartially and intelligently of the merits of each applicant for parole, this Board has no power except to make recommendations to the Attorney-General of the United States. It is the Attorney-General who actually grants the privilege to each United States prisoner to go out into the world again and try to walk the narrow path of rectitude. This Big Man, the Head of the Department of Justice, a Cabinet Officer, an individual in whose hands all of the vast legal business of the government of this country, with its population of one hundred million, reposes, is supposed to have the time to decide whether James Brown or William Smith is too dangerous to be at large, or whether he may with reasonable safety be allowed out on his word of honor to behave himself. In short, he is supposed to know that which in most cases can only be decided after intimate acquaintance. We are informed that God forgives sinners who deserve it. Whether there is a Celestial Board of Pardons and Paroles scripture saith not, but this much is clear, that the

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Attorney-General would have to be much more than human, if with all the affairs of state on his hands he could decide personally on the merits of men of whom he knows nothing. One of two things is certain; either he would have to waste an enormous amount of time in reaching a personal conclusion, or else he would have to delegate the decision to someone else and just affix his signature to a document, not knowing whether he was acting rightly or wrongly.

It is related of a certain prominent government official that he had no chance to consider the affairs of his office, all of his time being taken up in signing his name to documents poked under his nose by subordinates, without reading them, and that he actually signed his own resignation without knowing it. Quite likely, and quite likely is it also, that the Attorney-General may fulfil this role in the case of paroles.

The question arises; why bother this busy gentleman with such duties? Either he must take the word of the Parole Board, or he must personally convince himself in each case, thus wasting a lot of time, or, he must take the word of some clerk in his office, who is in no better position to judge than he is. The man is sent to prison, not by the Attorney-General, but by the judge who tries his case. Why then not leave the matter of parole to those who have personally investigated each case and know the man's behavior while in prison?

Under the present law a Federal prisoner is eligible to parole when he has served one-third of his term, or if a life prisoner, when he has served fifteen years. As there are about twenty-five hundred Federal prisoners, more or less, it is clear that the number seeking parole must be very large, and that the number recommended by the Parole Board and coming before the Attorney-General must be considerable. No one man could personally review so many cases. As a matter of fact it is stated that he turns down about two-thirds of the recommendations of the Board.

Why? Partly because, as a conscientious and cautious man, he is unwilling to take chances, and must accept the word of others, equally ill-informed, who also do not wish to take chances. The applicant's record, as presented in court, lies before him or his subordinates in black and white. He appears as an offender, as a bad man—that's why he went to prison. But the subtler observations of the Parole Board are not capable of such sharp expression. Good resolutions and good behavior don't get into the court records. The way to prison, like the way to hell, is paved with good intentions, but it is the slips which count. Can one be surprised that with this tangible evidence before him the Attorney-General declines to affix his O. K. to two-thirds of the recommendations of the Parole Board?

There is no inherent reason why the question of parole should be submitted to the Attorney-General at all. That it is the normal

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function of the Department of Justice, through the United States courts, to try and sentence a man is no reason for its deciding on the matter of parole. The court decides on the past behavior of the defendant, but it cannot decide on his future behavior, and hence whether he should be paroled, and so far as I know, the United States Government is an exception. In the states parole is a function of the prison administration, not of the Department of Justice.

Imagine that the decisions of each United States judge—and there are about one hundred of them—had to be approved by the Attorney-General, and that he could reverse them, sending a man to prison when the court had acquitted him, and you would have a situation like that which exists here. The Parole Board is a court which tries the prisoner, on the basis of the evidence before it, as to his fitness to be liberated on his word of honor, and the Attorney-General can, and in two-thirds of the cases actually does reverse the findings of this court.

And this red tape nonsense is worse than mere red tape. It can and frequently does work a great injustice to the prisoner, to whom parole is a matter of vital importance.

The Federal Parole Law says that the prisoner shall not be eligible for parole until he has served one-third of his original sentence, or if a life convict, until he has served fifteen years. Why one-third? What particular advantage is there in compelling him to serve just this amount regardless of all considerations? Many a man goes to prison for some technical offense, many a man commits an offense under a stress which may never occur again, and where the briefest term of imprisonment, combined with the annoyance and disgrace of trial and conviction would be quite sufficient to prevent repetition. To detain such a man when he might be employing himself reasonably is unjust. This it should be within the power of the Parole Board to decide at any time.

If you read the law as it stands you will learn another thing. The prisoner who violates any of the parole regulations is sent back to serve the balance of his term and is forever denied the right to further parole. This is manifestly unjust. Many of the requirements of the parole are of a purely technical nature, such as making a prompt report of the amount of money earned and spent each month. However necessary this may be, the neglect to report on his earnings and expenditures can hardly be regarded as a criminal act, and it does not speak well for the insight of those responsible for the law that it should be made the basis of depriving the man not only of his present parole, but of the right to any further consideration for parole. Most of the slips which the paroled man makes are such as would put one-half the population of the United States in prison, were they actually treated as he is. Granted, if you wish, that the paroled man must not only behave as well as the average citizen but must toe the mark as sharply as a bank

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cashier, still, it is unfair to punish him severely for that which would be winked at in you or me, and which in general would be nobody's business.

Hence justice demands that the revocation of a parole shall not prevent the Board from granting a further parole if in their opinion it would be an advantage to do so.

There is a curious flaw in the parole law which makes the status of a prisoner uncertain whose sentence has been commuted by the President. It is the function of the Attorney-General to interpret the law, and the present ruling is that he whose sentence has been commuted by the President is not eligible to parole at any time, no matter how long he has served. Just think of that, will you? The convict who has been sentenced for life may be paroled at the end of fifteen years, but if the President in his mercy commutes the sentence from life to fifty years, then the poor fellow must stay in prison the entire fifty years—no parole for him! What is intended to be an act of mercy actually becomes a curse to the recipient; palliating circumstances are actually made the means of excessive punishment. And this practically places the President in the position of a judge who imposes a fixed sentence which cannot be qualified either by the Parole Board or any other authority, a power which certainly is not given to him by the Constitution.

We want to do away with this and make it perfectly clear that commutation or shortening of sentence by the President shall not stand in the way of further concessions, should such appear advisable.

At present the Parole Board for each United States prison consists of the Superintendent of Prisons—an official located in Washington—of the warden and the prison physician. No special objection could be raised against these gentlemen, had they nothing to do but to decide on paroles. But remember, please, that the United States prisons are large institutions. It is the aim of the Government to make them models, hygienically and administratively. The warden and the physician have quite enough to do without sitting as judges over the inmates. That prison is most successful where there is a friendly spirit of cooperation between inmates and officials. It is stated as a fact that the prisoner who is denied parole acquires a feeling of distrust, suspicion and resentment towards the officers who have turned him down, and this is not conducive to good discipline. The local parole officer should therefore be one who can not only give his entire time to the subject, but one who is not responsible for discipline.

To sum up briefly; there is urgent need for amendment of the Federal Parole Law in the following respects:

1. Provision for a competent Parole Board, which shall have the absolute right to grant paroles; such Board to be composed

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mainly of members who have no other duties and who give their entire time to this work.

2. Relieving the Attorney-General of the duty of reviewing the decisions of the Parole Board, a duty which by reason of his other obligations he is not fitted to perform.

3. Removing the restriction which makes parole impossible until one-third of the term has been served, or in the case of life prisoners, fifteen years.

4. Making it possible for a parole violator to be paroled again, should the Board deem it expedient.

5. Removing the ambiguity which now makes it impossible for a prisoner with commuted sentence to be paroled.

Harrimanism Exemplified

If you want to know what Harrimanism is, just read the CRITIC of September 22d. Harrimanism is a plan by which people who are objectionable to the powers that be—especially supposedly incurable mental defectives—are to be deprived by a surgical operation of the power of having offspring.

The State of Wisconsin, which has gone mad before, has enacted a law permitting the sexual sterilization of mental defectives, which became operative in December. Twenty-four men were selected for the first batch, to be secretly "altered."

Here is the result of Wisconsin's first experiment, made several years ago. John Rehfeldt, husband of a normal wife and father of six normal children, was Harrimanized in 1911, on recommendation of the superintendent of the Appleton Asylum, where he was confined. In 1913 he was discharged, *cured, but no longer a man,* and returned to his wife and children.

Mrs. Rehfeldt secured a divorce. Rehfeldt brought suit for $10,000 against the superintendent and doctor of the Asylum, and finally, driven to desperation by the loss of his family and his manhood, became again insane and was returned to the asylum. The superintendent of the Asylum committeed suicide as a result. This successful experiment has induced Wisconsin to try again.

It may not be entirely creditable to Wisconsin that it cannot guard the inmates of its asylums, and has to emasculate them to make them "safe," but that matters little. It is a striking illustration of the power of money in securing results, even when it is applied to running a mutilation propaganda.

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE FEDERAL PAROLE LAW AND THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

—Declaration of Independence

I do not think I am exposing myself to the charge of sentimentality when I ask you to meditate on these words of the Declaration of Independence. We all accept them when we ourselves are concerned, but how far do we apply them to others? We all stood together in revolutionary days against encroachment by the foreigner, but is it not equally our duty to stand together today and insist that every one of our fellow citizens is protected in these rights? And if we are not doing so, are we not placing ourselves in the position of the oppressor against whom we fought?

"All men are . . . endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights . . . among these are life . . . ." Could the Governor of New York, when he signs a death warrant, or the people of Georgia or Arizona, when they clamor for blood, have signed the Declaration of Independence without writing themselves down as liars and hypocrites? " . . . liberty and pursuit of happiness." How about the 150,000 men who are today confined in the penal institutions of the United States, placed there often on the flimsiest evidence marshalled by a prosecuting attorney whose business and interest it is to secure conviction, and on the recommendation of a jury which knows no more of weighing evidence than does a horse, and often, too, for terms wholly out of proportion to the gravity of the offense and the inner character of the convict? Should we not keep the words of the Declaration of Independence before us, and busy ourselves, not so much with thwarting what we profess to believe to be the intentions of the Creator, as with backing them up?

"But you wouldn't allow these fellows to run wild, would

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you?" No, certainly not. Just as long as they manifest the inclination to deprive others of their inalienable rights, so long must they be resisted, as were the British in the eighteenth century. But —we must be cock-sure in the superlative degree that they will continue to deprive others of their inalienable rights before we insist on continuing to deprive them of theirs. As for taking their lives, there is no justification for that in these days—no, none.

I am not standing out for "letting criminals run loose," but I am insisting that the magic words "due process of law" afford no excuse or justification for continuing to deprive any one of his liberty without the most clear-cut evidence that he will deprive others of the rights which they share in common with him. We have long had laws for the protection of society against the individual, and are making them by the thousand. What we most need is more protection of the individual against society, against the whims of the majority, of the unorganized or organized mob which thoughtlessly deprives the individual of his freedom and even of his life. We raise a huge shout when a half dozen of our fellow countrymen are interfered with in their right to travel on the high seas in any fashion they wish, and we are right, but is it not equally worth our while to consider carefully those 150,000 who are traveling on the high seas of life—within prison walls? It is a scandal and a blot on the nation which made the Declaration of Independence that so little attention is given to these men who we by our own confession admit have an inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Surely the words "inalienable right" are emphatic enough; surely the Declaration does not say "except convicts."

It means simply this: that just as long as we have a law on our books which does not give to the confined man the utmost limit of a chance to make good, just so long are we ourselves the tyrants, the oppressors and the criminals.

Let us turn to the Federal Parole Law,—a law of the most beneficent intent, and the more so because it is not directed *against* any man, but is designed to protect the individual from society, to give liberty, not to take it away.

As it stands, it is a blessing to many whom "due process of law" has deprived of freedom. But it is not enough. If but one more man can be given his freedom with safety under an amended law, such an amendment should be made without a moment's delay.

Here are some of the essential features of the Federal Parole Law, and here are some of the points on which it is proposed to amend it.

Section 1. "That every prisoner who has been or may hereafter be convicted of any offense against the United States and is confined in execution of the judgment of such conviction (*a*) in any United States penitentiary or prison, for a definite term or terms of over one year, or for the term of his natural life, whose record of conduct shows that he has observed the rules

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of such institution, and who, if sentenced for a definite term, has served one-third of the total of such term or terms for which he was sentenced, or if sentenced for the term of his natural life, has served not less than fifteen years, may be released on parole as hereinafter provided."

The right of the man to liberty demands that he shall not be kept in prison even up to the limit of one-third of his sentence, or if a life prisoner, as long as fifteen years, unless it is obvious that he is likely to abuse that liberty. The assumption that one-third of the term imposed by the judge—no less—is required to fit him for freedom is a wholly irrational one, and in many cases works the grossest injustice. The same is true of the fifteen year limit for life prisoners. There cannot in the nature of things be a fixed time equivalent of an offense, neither can a limit be set for moral recovery. The amendment proposes, therefore, to remove the limitation, even in the case of life prisoners.

Further, it has been decided by the Attorney General that he who has had his sentence commuted is really serving a new sentence not implied in the above provision and is therefore not entitled to the benefit of the law. The life prisoner may be paroled at the end of fifteen yars, but should the President change that life sentence to one of say fifty years, then the poor fellow, whom it was designed to help, has to stay in prison the whole fifty years. Could anything be more absurd, irrational and unjust? The amendment proposes to insert above at (*a*) the words "or any commutation thereof," which leaves no question that all prisoners, without exception, are eligible to consideration for parole at any time.

Section 2. "That the superintendent of prisons of the Department of Justice, and the warden and physician of each United States penitentiary shall constitute a board of parole for such prison," etc.

The warden, as the head official of the prison, is a man of many affairs. Even if he does not feel called on to spend two-thirds of his time addressing public meetings and clubs, there is still plenty for him to do at home. A family of 1,000 to 1,500, and that is the population of our larger prisons, is a good sized one and imposes much responsibility. He is, or should be, too busy with administration to make the intimate personal acquaintance of all of his wards, or to follow them up when paroled. Violations of the rules or other misbehavior may come to his attention, but any man with ordinary self-control, no matter how bad he may be, can obey the rules—there is much more than obedience required to prove that he is worthy of liberty. The warden must stand before the men as one from whom they are to expect nothing in the way of favoritism. It is stated that they generally blame the officials when their applications for parole are turned down. This leads to suspicion and distrust not conducive to good discipline or cooperation. In short, the warden should be an executive, not a judge..

There is certainly no sound reason why the prison physician, rather than the engineer or cook, should be called on to fill the

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place of parole officer. His business is with the sick, not the well. Few outside physicians have a larger clientele than the prison doctor. His time is, or should be, fully occupied in looking after the health of the inmates and the sanitary condition of the prison without having to make himself familiar with the moral insides of each man. Better leave him to his drugs and place the duty on one whose sole business it is to know the men, to watch their conduct, decide on their merits, help them to find employment and keep track of them after they are paroled.

It is proposed, therefore, to give this work to a local parole officer, and to appoint in addition a general traveling parole officer, which two, together with the superintendent of prisons as at present, shall constitute the Parole Board of each United States prison.

Section 3. " . . . *Provided,* That no release on parole shall become operative until the findings of the board of parole shall have been approved by the Attorney General of the United States."

It is proposed to strike out this provision and thus allow the findings of the Parole Board to become automatically effective. The rationale of this is, that the Parole Board is a legally constituted court whose duty is to pass on giving the prisoner his freedom, just as the original court passed on the question of depriving him of it. It should therefore be equally competent to render a final decision, and such decisions should no more be subject to reversal by the Attorney General than are the decisions of the original United States court which sentenced him. Such questions are matters for specialists, not for a busy man like the Attorney General, who has all the legal business of the Government on his shoulders, and who is therefore not in a position to decide on the personal merits of Tom, Dick or Harry, and to place on him the responsibility of passing on a case of the merits of which he knows nothing and can know nothing without time-consuming study, while it may be in harmony with official ways of doing things, is simply red tape. No wonder that he turns down two-thirds of the recommendations of the Parole Board. All this simply places needless obstacles in the way of the convict's being restored to his inalienable rights.

Section 6 provides that the parole violator shall be returned to serve the remainder of his term. This would be well enough did it allow some latitude. I have often called attention to the difficulties which the prisoner encounters when paroled or discharged. Even if he is provided with work in advance, and that is frequently required in case of parole, still, he may not be able to hold his job—many another man is not—and public prejudice is against him. Even if he is not driven by want to a serious offense he may make a slip on some technical point of the parole rules, such as failing to report promptly his receipts and expenditures for the month. Such matters do not constitute criminal acts and should

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not be made the basis of forever depriving him of further consideration for parole. The amendment needed is therefore in the sense of leaving it open to the Board to grant a further parole if deemed advisable.

These, then, apart from some purely verbal changes, constitute the spirit of the proposed amendments:

1. Doing away with the absurdity that a man must sit in prison for one-third of the time for which he was sentenced, irrespective of his merits, and making him eligible for parole at any time.

2. Doing away with the absurdity that Executive clemency shall be made a cause for longer imprisonment.

3. A Parole Board constituted of those who have the time to give each case full study and consideration.

4. Making the Parole Board the final court in the matter of parole, instead of the Attorney General as at present.

5. Making it possible for him who breaks his parole, to be given another chance, if advisable.

To deprive the offender of his liberty is one thing; to deprive him of his *right* to liberty is a wholly different matter. The latter, unless the signers of the Declaration of Independence blundered, is something which is God-given, inalienable and beyond the power of society, judge or even the man himself to change. The parole law does not give him the right; it enforces it, and the proposed amendments facilitate this; they prevent his being needlessly detained for even one-third of the term imposed by a judge who had him in mind but a few days or hours, and who saw all of the bad and none of the good. Ponder over this, and you will see that every day that we detain the convict without good evidence that it is absolutely necessary, constitutes us, rather than him, the aggressor and the criminal.

Microscopic Effects of the Federal Parole Law

That one would need a microscope to perceive the benefits of the present Federal Parole Law—not as written—but as administered, will appear from the following figures relating to United States prisoners confined in and paroled from the Eastern State Penitentiary of Pennsylvania:

Total number confined, Jan. 1, 1916	66
Total number now on parole	2
Total number paroled in 1915 (2 of whom had served to within a few months of their maximum term)	4
Total number whose one-third time was completed between Nov. 24, 1914, and Dec. 10, 1915, who are eligible for parole, but still confined	36

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All of which means, not that men are sent to the Eastern Penitentiary because they are too bad to be jugged elsewhere, but that no law, however wise and beneficent, has any value, as long as its administration is left to indifferent, incompetent or hostile officials.

A Word To Prison Wardens

You are respectfully requested to report to this office any cases of indiscretion on the part of our LEAGUE members who are corresponding with your inmates. With our very large membership and in spite of our careful instructions it may sometimes happen that a member transgresses the bounds of propriety. This should not be made a reason for reproaching the LEAGUE as a whole, as we think we are doing something to help and interest your inmates.

If you will report such cases to us promptly and frankly they will be taken up immediately with the offending person. It is our desire to cooperate with you in every way, and we intend to insist that every individual member shall do the same. A word from you to us, mentioning the offending person by name and the cause of complaint, will save you further correspondence and annoyance without the necessity of interfering with our relations with other inmates.

If you will furnish us a marked copy of your rules we shall be glad to call the attention of our members to them in future.

And please do not hold us responsible for the indiscretions of those who have no connection whatever with us.

Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 124 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: U. S. Penitentiary, Atlanta, 14; Georgia State Penitentiary, 3; California, Folsom, 9; California, San Quentin, 2; U. S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, 25; Maine, 20; Missouri, 2; Montana, 11; Nevada, 1; New York, Clinton, 1; New York, Sing Sing, 16; New York, Women's Prison, 10; Oregon, 2; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary, 5; Texas, 1; Washington, 2; Wisconsin, 1.

Also an almost equal number who desire additional correspondents, or have been disappointed by their first correspondents neglecting them.

Georgia State Penitentiary Wants Literature

Prisoners in the Georgia State Penitentiary make an appeal for reading matter of any kind. We understand that there is no restriction on their receiving proper literature. Send to *B. G. Martin, care of T. P. Knight, Warden, Monticello, Georgia,* or to *Ernest H. Jones, care of W. C. McDonald, Warden, Conyers, Georgia.*

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Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

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STOOL PIGEONS

The term "stool pigeon" is used in prisons in a sense not to be found in the dictionary, but that does not matter. A stool pigeon is a prisoner who gains favor with the authorities by playing the detective and betraying his companions, and who may or may not be directly employed for that purpose. Judas Iscariot, probably the meanest character in sacred history, and whose name has become a byword, was a stool pigeon. Any man who worms himself into the confidence of another and betrays him is a stool pigeon and a Judas, and nothing better could happen to the world than that all such people, like Judas, should go out and hang themselves.

It is said on the authority of the Bible that in a large house there are vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, and one does not need the authority of Scripture to recognize the fact. Nobody doubts that the slop jar is quite as important as the soup tureen, and that if we did away with the slop jar we should soon be using the soup tureen in its place.

Society also has its vessels to honor and its vessels to dishonor. It has the men who do the big work, the work of honor and responsibility, the work which everyone would like to do, and it also has its scullions and scavengers—honest if not desirable employments—who do the dirty work; and last and lowest of all, it has the professional betrayer, the professional Judas, whose work is dirty indeed.

Of course I do not wish to cast a slur on the calling of detective, which is necessary and which need not be dishonorable. As long as society has its parasites it must have those whose aim is to ferret them out and put a stop to their depredations. But if society cannot do without the man who makes it his business to gain the confidence of others in order to betray him, then, I say, it needs the prostitute also. What are the aims of the professional betrayer? His aim is to make a living; he works for pay and incidentally protects, or is supposed to protect, society. The aim of the prostitute is equally laudable; she makes a living and incidentally—can it be denied?—protects virtuous girls from the seducer. She sells her virtue, as also does the professional betrayer.

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This may seem an extreme standpoint. Everybody professes —openly—to abhor the prostitute. Does she not break a fundamental moral law? Quite true, but the moral law which the betrayer breaks is quite as fundamental, in fact, I think more so. Communities have flourished in ancient times, and reached a high degree of culture—good, honest culture, too—in which prostitution has been a trade not only recognized but even respected; it has even been made a part of religion. We have dropped that, but we have given the tag of respectability to a trade far more infamous.

What is my reason for saying this? Just this. We labor under the delusion that society is held together by laws. In a sense that is true, but far deeper is the character of the individual units. The fundamental basis of social existence is trust. Have all the laws you wish, but let the individual units be inspired by mutual distrust, or let them be lacking in the spirit of mutual loyalty, and your community is nothing but a box of sand, ready to fall to pieces the moment the box is broken. The law is but the containing wall; what cements society together is the belief that you can trust your fellows. Perhaps this is more obvious in the case of the family. Imagine to yourself a family, living under one roof, where no member can be sure that he can trust the others, where he fears that his letters may be opened, his private drawer unlocked and ransacked, his slightest word, spoken in confidence, reported and perhaps used to his detriment. It is entirely the same in society at large. We may detest the chronic liar or tell-tale, but we learn to discount these. A far more dangerous person is he who plays the friend while acting the spy. Against such we have no protection. We have to provide locks and bolts because, perhaps, a burglar may be lurking about. So, too, one person who may act the traitor puts the whole community in a state of defense.

For the well-being of society is it absolutely essential that confidences must be respected. You may, if you wish, say that the tip-top virtue is watertightness. It is, perhaps a misfortune that vessels tight enough to hold milk will also hold poison, that no bottle has yet been invented which will hold every kind of respectable liquid but let whiskey leak out. But such things belong to Omnipotence. He who will let a confidence leak out when he thinks it to his own advantage or that of the community to do so, cannot be counted on to keep the most harmless secret, while he who is watertight for the latter will be watertight for the former also. Retentiveness and leakiness are habits of mind, not to be found combined in the same individual.

Society is therefore not serving itself when it encourages leakiness. The professional leaker, the man who steals secrets and reveals them, is not to be distinguished from any other kind of thief. Yet the state directly encourages this. It hires people to do it. It forces people on the witness stand to reveal confidences.

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And yet, as proving the falseness of its position, it makes certain exceptions. A priest cannot be legally compelled to reveal what is given to him in the confessional; a physician cannot be forced to reveal a confession of his patient nor a lawyer that of his client. Why these exceptions? Does the mere fact of having a certificate in law, medicine or divinity alter the moral status of the act? Is not a confidence just as sacred, whether it be given to your priest, your doctor, your lawyer or your cook?

Doubtless, it is a short cut to force people to betray confidences, or to hire them to do so, just as it is a short cut to hang an obnoxious member of society rather than reform him, but I do not believe that society can profit in the long run by breaking the most fundamental principle of its existence. It cannot justly force it, and still less can it afford to foster the professional Judas. Would you trust your private affairs, no matter how harmless, to him who makes it his business to betray, even though he has a detective's badge under the lappel of his coat? You would not. You would feel that the man cannot break the moral law of trust in one case, for pay, and be trusted not to break it in another, if it were to his advantage to do so.

It used to be the custom in schools to encourage the pupils to tell on each other. What a way of encouraging personal honor! The boy who tells should be the one to be most severely punished. Our laws grant partial or complete exemption to the offender who betrays his comrades; they place a premium on treachery added to other crimes. Such fellows should be doubly punished. He who refuses to prostitute himself in this way is possessed of a virtue which should be encouraged, no matter what his offense may be; he has the true spirit of honor and loyalty, even if employed to base ends; he has in him the making of a good citizen. But he who turns state's evidence has in him the making of a traitor.

To return to the stool pigeon. If the school is a place where personal loyalty should be fostered, even at some temporary inconvenience, so also is the prison. It is well enough known that in some prisons, perhaps in most, tale bearing is encouraged. The principle is wrong. If any inmate should be put in the hole on bread and water, it is he who peaches. The reason is not far to seek. In no place should more attetntion be paid to the cultivation of personal honor than in prison; nowhere is it more needful to inculcate regard for others. To encourage violation of this principle, to foster mutual distrust among the inmates, is not only subversive of good discipline, but it is going squarely against the object for which the prison primarily exists—the remaking of men. The prison should be a place where men of honor, not Judases, are manufactured.

I do not wish to be thought extreme. There may be exceptions. It is doubtless the duty of him who knows that a crime is

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to be committed to warn the victim or the police. There are emergencies in which one must act promptly and not according to rule, but those do not apply *ex post facto*. We may blow up buildings to prevent the spread of a fire. We may warn him whom we know is about to commit a crime that we will not guard his sceret. As a clerk, we are not under obligation to be a party to crookedness on the part of our employer—we may resign if we wish. But if we do not, then we must guard whatever comes to us as we guard our lives. We cannot possibly continue to receive in confidence that which we are willing to reveal, or allow to be forced from us, simply because it is to our present interest to do so, without writing the word "Traitor" after our names. He who accepts the commission of carrying a sealed package and pries into it—and this is equally true whether it be the boy with the bicycle or the Postoffice Department—is guilty of a breach of trust. He is not compelled to carry it; he can, if he wishes, demand that it be presented unsealed, or sealed in his presence after inspection. But once accepted, once having its owner at his mercy, nothing but the grossest lack of a sense of honor will allow him to tamper with it.

And all of these things are but exemplifications of the Golden Rule—to do to others as you would have them do to you.

Sing Sing Mutual Welfare League Bulletin

In opening my daily mail, quite a considerable one, by the way, two things give me special pleasure. One is the blue gleam of a money order conveying a contribution from some friend of our work; the other is the blue gleam of envelopes scattered through the pile, which I can be reasonably sure bear the words "354 Hunter Street, Ossining, New York," in the upper lefthand corner. This, you may or may not know, is the official address of Sing Sing Prison. These blue envelopes are placed in a pile and opened after the other letters have been passed on to the clerks and there is a little more time, as a sort of dessert.

Do you want to know why I call Sing Sing letters the dessert? It is this. I do not want to make comparisons. I have friends in many prisons, and in most of these the officials are doing the best the law will allow them, but the policy of the management inevitably reflects itself in the character of the letters written by the men, and that means, of course, in the character of the men themselves. I can almost tell from what prison a letter comes, even without reading the letterhead. The writer does not have to tell you in what a nice prison he is. One knows that these letters have to pass a censor, and that things may be said with the object of getting them passed, and he learns not only to discount the statements made, but also to read between the lines. There is a subtle something not susceptible to censoring, which shows you how the man feels.

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Now, about these Sing Sing letters there is that which to my mind justifies the policy of the late Warden, Mr. Osborne, much more than any open expressions could do. One perceives without any direct words to that effect, and in a much more convincing manner, that this policy is having a beneficent influence on the inmates. It is not my object at this time to enter into this. If you want to understand it you will have to get into touch with some of these men yourself. I will only add that it completely justifies the policy of an unrestricted correspondence privilege, and that incidentally it causes one to remember that in this progressive institution there still remains that dark spot, that relic of an age of barbarism, the death chamber.

Sing Sing is the only prison which can boast of two periodical publications. *The Star of Hope,* the oldest prison paper, I believe, and as large as it is old, is published every two weeks at a subscription price of $2.50 a year. This is really the organ of all of the five state prisons of New York, Sing Sing, Auburn, Clinton, Great Meadow and Women's Prison, and is almost as varied in its contents as an outside magazine. Recently the *Mutual Welfare League* of Sing Sing has begun to publish its own organ, a weekly now eleven weeks old, a much smaller publication devoted primarily to the interests of the *League,* but containing also much matter of wider interest. Modesty forbids me to comment too closely on the latter feature, as the last issue contains two articles, one on "The Repeater," the other on "The Federal Parole Law," which seem strangely familiar, and which in fact are editorials which have recently appeared in the CRITIC. In the same issue—January 22d—is an article on the "Inmate Court," from which you can learn something about self-government among prisoners, an innovation introduced by Mr. Osborne. From this article you can also learn how the prisoner regards the "stool pigeon," to whom we have paid our compliments on another page.

It is expected that a subscription price will soon be fixed for the *Bulletin of the Mutual Welfare League.* I am informed by the Secretary of the *League* that for the present it will be sent on request to anyone who is interested. The address of the *Bulletin* is given above.

Letter From A Prisoner

Dr. H. N. Stokes Jan. 28, 1916.

Dear Friend:—

Haveing nobody to write to and haveing no friends, I heard of you and I thought I would drop a line or two to see if you could help me find some party to write to. Father and Mother is dead and I haven't any friend in this world. Anything you can do will be appreciate.

E— — — — B— — — — —

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Our Goat

Another thing that "gets our goat" is to have a member decline to make a small contribution, and to ship us a ream of letters, expressing the hope that reading them will prove a satisfactory equivalent—said letters to be returned postpaid at our expense. For heaven's sake send us the postage stamps you use and spare our time. Our goat is very patient, but he is inclined to butt those who display such a lack of a sense of humor.

Membership in The O. E. Library League

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Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

Hurry Up Call for Correspondents

We have just received seventy applications for correspondents from men in the Washington State Penitentiary. Wake up and help us, won't you?

Not a Matrimonial Bureau. Prisoners who ask for single girls or widows of specified ages as correspondents must state fully their reasons for such requests, or they will be either wholly ignored, or assigned to an elderly matron. The LEAGUE does not conduct a matrimonial bureau.

Special Volunteer Prison Correspondents Wanted

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BY

The O. E. Library League

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

A FEDERAL PROBATION LAW

"A bill for the establishment of a probation system in the United States courts, except in the District of Columbia," S-1092, introduced by Hon. Robert L. Owen, Senator from Oklahoma.

There is a story in the Bible about a man who gave a great supper and who sent out his servants with orders to compel people to come in. Quite parallel with this is the old notion that the kingdom of hell is made by devils with pitchforks rounding up the sinners. So used are we to the conception that we unhesitatingly apply it to the building up of God's kingdom on earth—or, to use a less pious expression, to building up a decent community. We labor under the notion that men may be made good by force, and we apply it on every possible occasion, forgetting that virtue is virtue only when it is voluntary; that he who is forced to behave himself against his will is not one whit better than he who misbehaves.

Our penal system is based on two ideas; one, punishment—if the guests will not come in to the supper, catch them and shut them up in the cellar—the other, reformation by force—a period spent in the cellar will make them ready and willing to join with the guests on the floor above. Our principle is to drive, not to lead. We have established a system of prisons, and of reformatories which are prisons under another name, in which on the least pretext we shut men up for a period of months or years, hoping that by the time they are through they will be ready to be good citizens. We herd together the young offender, the boy who has sinned almost ignorantly, with old time offenders, men guilty of every imaginable offense, on the obvious principle that he with a broken nose can be healed by putting him in a room with a smallpox patient.

Without in the least denying that he who is unwilling to restrain himself must be placed where he cannot interfere with the rights of others, doesn't it strike you that to attempt to teach the right use of liberty by confinement is something like attempting to make a skilled locomotive engineer by locking him up in a room with a text-book? You wouldn't ride behind such a man if you knew it, would you? Neither would you trust a man to steer himself through the complicated problems of life, when his notion of

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liberty was gained by looking out through a cell window, or reading the newspapers.

Consequently, while we may perhaps never be able to get along without prisons, we should try in every possible way to keep men out of them, to give them every possible chance to learn good behavior in the outside world, the only school in which it can be effectively learned—actual contact with situations which demand self-control, which afford the chance to meet temptations and to resist them.

The biggest advance made in this direction is the treatment of offenders by the probation system, according to which juvenile delinquents, instead of being committed to a reformatory or prison are placed by the court under the supervision of a probation officer, whose duty it is to advise and watch over them, to act the parent, as it were. The sentence which the law allows is suspended, and the youthful offender is given every possible opportunity to work out his own salvation without interference with his natural and proper pursuits. The last few years have seen wonderful progress in this direction and in most large cities we now have special juvenile courts, conducted by judges whose natural character is such as to enable them to understand and feel for, rather than against, the delinquents brought before them.

That we have thus far limited this system to young offenders is based on a certain delusion. We grown-ups draw a tolerably sharp line between children and adults; we talk of the "age of discretion." This line exists only in our imagination. You may or may not believe in angels, but no matter what your view I think you must admit that theoretically there can exist a superman, a being wearing boiled shirts or petticoats, if you wish, but still greatly our superior in knowledge, wisdom and virtue. In fact, as compared with what we might be we are all more or less children; we are all pupils in the great world's school, no matter whether young or old. Any principle which applies to the youth must of necessity apply with more or less force to the adult also. It is quite unreasonable to assume that the limit of physical growth is likewise the limit of mental, and specially of moral growth. While the statistics of psychologists have a certain weight, there are compensating influences which will tell if given a chance.

And so here. If it is wise and just to place a child on probation rather than to shut him up, so, too, it must be wise and just in many cases with the adult also. The "first offender" no matter what his age, is in a sense to be compared to the child. He should be given a chance without using the drastic method of confinement and turning him out after a period of years, with as little experience as before, and with a good slice of his life wasted. And the same applies, with less force, doubtless, to those who are

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not offenders for the first time, where palliating circumstances exist.

The law proposed by Senator Owen is a very radical departure. It proposes to apply the probation system to adults likewise, and refers to cases coming within the jurisdiction of United States courts, over which Congress has direct control.

Section 1 provides that a judge of a United States court may at his discretion appoint one or more probation officers, who shall serve under such judge and who may receive their expenses, and a salary, under conditions defined.

Section 2 provides that after a plea or verdict of guilty of any crime or offense except treason, murder, rape, or kidnapping, if there be mitigating circumstances, the judge may suspend sentence and place the offender in charge of said probation officer. The judge may determine the conditions and terms of the probation and may modify the same subsequently, provided that the length of the probation period shall not exceed the maximum term for which the defendant might have been originally sentenced. It is also optional with the judge to terminate the probation and to reimpose the original sentence.

Section 3 provides that upon sentencing the defendant to pay a fine of not more than $1000 and to be imprisoned until it be paid, the judge may suspend execution of the sentence and place the defendant upon probation. The payment of the fine shall terminate the probation, while the judge may at any time terminate the probation and reimpose the original sentence.

Section 4 requires the probation officer to inquire into the past history, character and circumstances of the defendant, to keep himself informed as to his doings, and to report monthly to the court. He shall further give the probationer a written statement of the term and conditions of his probation and require him to make such reports as may be necessary.

Section 5 provides that the act shall take effect immediately.

The working of this measure, if adopted, will be watched with the keenest interest. Nothing more radical and important has ever been proposed in the field of penal legislation. There are, I believe, one or two cases where local judges are similarly empowered, apart from judges of juvenile courts, but they have not as yet attracted attention. The matter of probation is left entirely to the discretion of the judge, with the exceptions mentioned, and on his attitude depends whether the law shall be a success or a failure. One may expect that the older men and those who insist on giving the offender the full measure of the law will not make as much use of it as younger men who are more likely to be in sympathy with progressive ideas, and it may therefore be some years before it reaches the full limit of its power. Very wisely the bill does not limit its action to young or first offenders, and leaves it optional

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with the judge to extend it to older men and to those who have been before the court before.

There is one point on which the bill is not perfectly clear, and on which one could wish it to be explicit. I judge that it applies only to sentences which shall hereafter be imposed. There are to-day hundreds of United States prisoners who, should they come before the court again on the same charge on which they are now confined would be liberated on probation, but who are compelled to serve out their terms, subject only to the uncertain working of a defective parole law, a law which, as at present written, compels them to sit in prison for at least one-third of the time for which they were originally sentenced. In justice to these men the judges who sentenced them, or some other judge who has reviewed the case, should be empowered to liberate them at once on probation. The present Federal parole law makes no provision for the placing of a paroled convict under the charge of a probation officer, but the rules of the Department of Justice require him who is liberated on parole, in most cases, at least, to have a "first friend," a disinterested individual who shall serve as a sort of guardian. This is only a half-way measure. With the appointment of probation officers for United States courts, such officers should be the ones empowered to act as "first friend," and also to find employment for the paroled convict, when necessary. In order to allow the offender who has been placed on probation greater latitude in seeking employment, provision should be made for his transfer to probation officers serving in districts other than the one in which he was tried.

It is to be hoped that before the measure is passed it will be so amended as to make it retroactive. Justice is justice, quite apart from the date of passing a law. If it is right to free at once him who has been proved innocent of the charge for which he has been sent to prison, so too it is just to give those who have been sentenced under an unnecessarily harsh or narrow law the full benefit of any provision made for those who are so fortunate as to come later. It is just not only to the men themselves, who are deprived of the exercise of their inalienable right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but it is just to their families who require their support, and to society at large, which is maintaining them in more or less idleness, and paying the bill.

Copies of Mr. Owen's bill may be obtained by addressing *Senate Document Room, Capitol, Washington, D. C.,* asking for S-1092.

Prison Journalism. Those interested in prisoners should read the prison newspapers, published by prisoners. We print a list of these in this issue, and when we have them, as we usually do, we shall be glad to send sample copies for a couple of stamps to pay postage.

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Our Goat

Our goat has a wonderful digestion and does not in the least object to a diet of writing paper. He finds, however, that the office stenographer is not satisfied with such provender, and neither is the printer, and that even such letters as tell him what a beautiful Billy he is, and how nice it would be if somebody else would feed him on greenbacks, while having a delicate flavor, tend to cause indigestion and a consequent desire to butt. The kind of paper he assimilates with most ease is that on which bank checks and money orders are written, and even postage stamps are digested readily.

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The LEAGUE desires to secure the voluntary aid of a few of its members who are expert typists, or who are exceptionally good letter writers, who will offer to relieve the congestion in this office by writing form letters,answering letters on their own initiative, etc. This is exclusively in connection with prison work. It is not intended to ask an amount of work which will interfere with other duties, but only such are desired as can be counted on to do what they undertake systematically and promptly. Those living within a day's mailing distance of Washington are preferred, but there is work for others. Where the nature of the work demands it we will supply letterheads and other stationery, and if desired, pay postage for mailing.

Letter From A Prisoner

Dr. H. N. Stokes Jan. 23, 1916.

Dear Sir:—

I have been given your address by league member No. ——, who states that you would give me a correspondence which I would appreciate very much. I havenet a Friend in here he haven got no Friends in this country at all to write to and have a long sentence. He is a Bulgarian. I hoping you will see the way clear in doing so,

Yours grateful,

A———— E————

A Modern Instance. "Two Years' Experience as a Prisoner in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, the Model Prison of the World, by *George B. Wright,* who is now confined in this Institution and Innocent of the Crime charged." Price 50 cents; sold by the LEAGUE for the benefit of the author.

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[List 12-A] Prisons, Criminals, and Delinquents

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Brockway, Z. R.—Fifty Years of Prison Service, $2.00.
Autobiography of an eminent warden and reformatory superintendent. Indispensable to students of prison reform.

Convict 1776—On Open Letter to Society, $0.85.

Currier, Albert H.—Present Day Problem of Crime, $1.10.

Devon, Dr. James—The Criminal and the Community, $1.90.

Dostoieffsky, Fedor—The House of the Dead, or Prison Life in Siberia, $0.45.
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Ellis, Havelock—The Criminal, $1.60.

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Hawthorne, Julian—The Subterranean Brotherhood, $1.65.
A rather ill-natured account of the author's experience as inmate of the Atlanta Penitentiary.

Healy, Dr. William—The Individual Delinquent, $5.25.
Pathological Lying, Accusation and Swindling, (with *Mary Tenney*), $2.15.

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Henderson, Charles Richmond—Editor. 4 vols. prepared from the 8th International Prison Congress.

Prison Reform and Criminal Law, $2.66.

Criminal Law in the United States (by *Eugene Smith*). 2d part Prison Reform and Criminal Law, $1.10, sold only.

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Late President of the Court of Appeals of Naples.

Aschaffenburg, Gustav—Crime and Its Repression, $4.00.

Gross, Hans—Criminal Psychology, $5.00.

A fascinating work, of great value to all students of human nature. How to judge a man from his words, actions and dress.

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Juvenile Offenders, $1.65.

Mosby, C. V.—Crime; its Cause and Cure, $2.00.

Osborne, Thomas Mott—Within Prison Walls, $1.65.

A faithful narrative of personal experiences during the author's voluntary confinement in Auburn Prison, New York.

Parsons, Philip A.—Responsibility for Crime, paper, $1.50.

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Quinton, R. F.—The Modern Prison Curriculum; a General Review of our Penal System, $1.90.

Ribot, Th.—The Psychology of the Emotions, $1.50.

Solenberger, Alice W.—One Thousand Homeless Men, illustr., $1.25.

Taylor, Winifred Louise—The Man Behind the Bars, $1.60.

True, Ruth Smiley—Boyhood and Lawlessness; the Neglected Girl, $2.00.

Weidensall, J.—Mentality of the Criminal Woman, $1.75.

Whitin, E. S.—Penal Servitude; temporarily out of print.

Wilde, Oscar—The Ballad of Reading Gaol, $0.55.

Wines, F. H.—Punishment and Reformation, $1.75.

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A List of Prison Newspapers

The study of the prison newspaper, written and edited by prisoners, is indispensable to an understanding of a very important side of prison reform. the convict himself. *Subscriptions and inquiries should be sent to the addresses given.*

Arranged alphabetically according to states.

Good Words; monthly. U. S. Penitentiary, Atlanta, Ga. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Bulletin; monthly. Organ of the San Quentin Agricultural Club, San Quentin Prison, Calif. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

Industrial School Magazine; monthly. State Industrial School for Boys, Golden, Colo. One year, 50 cts., half-year, 25 cts., copies, 5 cts.

The Chronicle; monthly. Connecticut State Reformatory, Cheshire, Conn. 50 cts. a year.

The Monthly Record; monthly. Connecticut State Prison, Wethersfield, Conn. 50 cts. a year; 25 cts. for 6 months; copy, 5 cts.

The Joliet Prison Post; quarterly. Illinois State Penitentiary, Joliet, Ills. $1.00 a year; copy, 25 cts.

The Pioneer; weekly. State Reformatory, Pontiac, Ills. 50 cts. a year; 25 cts. for 6 months; copy, 5 cts.

The Reflector; weekly. State Reformatory, Jeffersonville, Ind. 50 cts. a year; 15 cts. for 3 months.

Reformatory Press; weekly. State Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa. 75 cts. a year.

Leavenworth New Era; weekly. U. S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Reformatory Herald; weekly. Kansas State Industrial Reformatory, Hutchison, Kansas. 50 cts. a year.

The Square Deal; weekly. Kansas State Penitentiary, Lansing, Kansas. 50 cts. a year.

Stray Shots; weekly. U. S. Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. No subcriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Mirror; weekly. Minnesota State Prison, Stillwater, Minn. $1.00 a year; 25 cts. for 6 months.

The Reformatory Pillar; monthly. State Reformatory, St. Cloud, Minn. 50 cts. a year.

The Better Citizen; bi-weekly. State Reformatory, Rahway, N. J. 50 cts. a year.

The Bulletin; weekly. Organ of *The Mutual Welfare League*, Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, N. Y. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Star of Hope; bi-weekly. $2.50 a year. Organ of the five New York State prisons. Published at Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, N. Y.

The Summary; weekly. State Reformatory, Elmira, N. Y. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Reflector; monthly. State Penitentiary, Bismarck, North Dakota. 50 cts. a year; 30 cts. for 6 months.

The Ohio Penitentiary News; weekly. Columbus, Ohio. 50 cts. a year.

Lend A Hand; monthly. Oregon State Penitentiary, Salem, Oregon. $1.00 a year; 25 cts. for 3 months; copy, 10 cts.

The Umpire; weekly. Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia, Pa. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Prison Monitor; monthly. Vermont State Prison, Windsor, Vermont. $1.00 a year; 50 cts. for 6 months.

Our View Point; monthly. Washington State Penitentiary, Walla Walla. Wash. $1.00 a year; 50 cts. for 6 months.

The Index; weekly. State Reformatory, Monroe, Wash. 50 cts. a year.

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V Wednesday, March 8, 1916 No. 15

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE SILENT SYSTEM

Happy is he whose resources are within himself and who does not depend on the external for his happiness. But such are few, and the senses are therefore made the source both of pleasure and of suffering.

Forbidding prisoners to speak to each other, and in extreme cases shutting them up in dark cells in the sub-basement, these have long been favorite methods of inflicting punishment. There still exist prisons where silence is enforced and even in those which do not carry it to an extreme, the men are frequently forbidden to speak during meals. In the rules of one institution we read that the prisoner, at meals, must make his wants known to the waiter by signs. The code is not printed, but as the deaf and dumb are able to express their wish for coffee or beans, so it must be here also.

The silent system of punishment still has its advocates, but what surprises me is that it does not appear to have occurred to anyone to introduce the noisy system; to punish, not by withdrawal of welcome sounds, but by infliction of unwelcome ones. We read of now almost obsolete methods and instruments of torture, but there is no mention of the graphophone, the barking dog, the chorus of roosters or lovesick tomcats. These are reserved for the outside world.

The dictionary defines "assault" as "an attempt or offer to do violence to another, coupled with present ability to effect it, but irrespective of whether the person is touched or not, as by lifting the fist or a cane in a threatening manner." Our ideas on the subject are strangely rudimentary. I may not strike or threaten to strike another; I may not project missiles which come into contact with any part of his body. The law gives him full protection, even if I do it for my own business or amusement and without personal animus, but if, for my own business or amusement I set air waves in motion which impinge on his ear drum, causing him annoyance, pain, or loss of rest, he is helpless. My neighbor may not offend my nose with odors from his factory, his garbage pail or his cesspool. He may not touch my body, except in the unavoidable contact of the crowd or the car. He may not

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offend my eye. In many cities there are laws against loud posters, while in this city the papers have recently been filled with protests against the erection of a disfiguring building in a certain locality. Men have been brought into court for taking sun baths in front of their open window, to the horror of the old ladies next door, who insisted on their right to peer into the neighbor's windows without offense. But the ear has no protection. What is the difference? Is not striking the ear drum with sound waves just as much an assault as a deliberate box on the ear?

"Oh, you are only nervous," says one. Quite true; I am nervous. I don't like being struck with stones, but no more do I enjoy having my ears boxed from a distance. I claim that my auditory nerve is as much entitled to the protection of the law as my olfactory or optic nerve, or my nerves of touch.

Let us consider the matter for a moment from the standpoint of physiology. Physiological experiments have shown, and experience bears out the fact that the depth or intensity of sleep is at its maximum about an hour after going to sleep, and that it slowly peters out until a small noise is sufficient to awaken. You have observed how, at the moment when sleep is beginning, a small disturbance is sufficient to bring one back to full consciousness, and how in the morning a little noise will do the same. The result is a curtailment of the time devoted to repose, and a consequent injury. It is not nervousness to desire the normal amount of sleep, and that which curtails it is an obvious nuisance. Further, remember that a nerve trunk is not like a telegraph wire nor the nerve center in which it ends like a receiving instrument, which never wear out no matter how much used. Every impulse traveling along a nerve uses up nerve substance, and the same is true of the nerve center. The repair goes on simultaneously and may or may not keep pace with the waste. There are nerves, as there are muscles, which manage under normal conditions of continuous activity to keep repair up to waste. Just as the heart throbs incessantly for seventy-five years, never resting, so there are nerves which never rest. But everyone knows that this wonderful persistency is possible only when they are not overtaxed, when the waste is not carried too far and repair can keep up with it. But even that most worked sensory nerve, the optic nerve, needs rest. For ages and ages it has adapted itself to working without ceasing for sixteen hours out of twenty-four, but it demands its eight hours for repair. But with the auditory nerve it is not so. Until recently men had but few means of making a noise. But now the silence of the forest has been replaced by the bustle of the city. The auditory apparatus has not adapted itself fully to the change; it needs more time for repair than the optic nerve. And remember too that you can shut your eyes, but the ear has no such protection. Beneficent night shuts off the means of seeing, but it does not do away with the atmosphere which

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carries the sound waves. And even if one does not notice the noises; if he "gets used to them," the nerve trunk still carries the impression to the brain; the auditory center still receives it, even though it does not transmute it into consciousness, and the wear and tear goes on all the same, even if we are not conscious of it, until the effect forces itself on us through deafness or numerous other bodily disturbances. Have you ever noticed how an unexpected noise causes a shock, often perceptibly affecting the heart beat? Every noise has its effect, even if not consciously perceived. To tolerate noise on the plea that one "gets used to it" is like tolerating bad air, bad cooking, whiskey, rats, dirt, lying and thousands of other things which do not make for physical and spiritual health, on the ground that one "gets used to them."

To say that I am nervous and therefore have no right to protection is to assert that hospitals are needless because only now and then one gets sick, or that the police may be dispensed with because only an occasional person is disposed to disorder. No; the laws are made for the exceptions.

Let us consider a few cases. In this day of clocks and watches we still tolerate that abomination, that relic of a dark age, the church bell. In my vicinity there is a church which announces its six o'clock in the morning service by a jangling of metal which can be heard for miles. These good people, who rightly desire to have their friends begin the day with worship, start out by waking the whole neighborhood, by arousing more people than their church would hold, were it twice the size of Saint Peter's, and by inducing profanity enough to send to hell ten times as many souls as they can hope to save. It is not nervousness to desire the normal amount of sleep; it is not through nervousness, but a normal psysiological law, that after several hours of unconsciousness I am easily awakened; it is not nervousness that I demand protection from this wholly needless assault on my ears, especially as those who want to go to church can easily get an alarm clock and plague the members of their family alone. The avowed object of the church bell is to make itself heard, and quite irrespective of whether those hearing it are interested or not. It is one of the worst forms of running amuck among the ears of the populace; it is one of the most flagrant cases of "the public be damned."

And the same compliments are due the factory whistle.

In the old days when the word "street" was a synonym for mud hole and when everybody kept a cow in his back yard, the three o'clock milk wagons and the iron shod horses caused little annoyance, but in this day of stone pavements the iron hoofs and iron tires are much in evidence. One must be a sound sleeper indeed to get through the night without being roused by these milk vendors. At one time it might have been too much to demand that horses be rubber shod and wheels rubber tired, but today, with

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nearly every vehicle running about on rubber tires, it is not too much to insist that the few horse-drawn vehicles be made soundless likewise.

People who want to produce "music" with pianos and graphophones doubtless have their rights, but they should be compelled to keep their windows closed on risk of being arrested on complaint of anyone who is annoyed. The right to make a noise in one's own house should be limited to the house; it should not carry with it the privilege of assault and battery on everyone within hearing distance. Those men who go about the streets with noise boxes—so-called street pianos—and levy blackmail on the people, making day hideous, should be treated to a ceaseless dose of their own product.

I live two miles from the railroad station, but when the wind is from that direction it is almost impossible to sleep for the noise of the puffing engines. Why, in heaven's name, should the railroads be allowed to disturb the sleep of thousands in these days when electrification is possible and practicable? For miles one can hear the screeching of the locomotive whistle at every crossing in the country, when an electric alarm bell would serve just as well if not better.

In this city my neighbor may not keep chickens within twenty feet of my house—presumably on the theory that fleas do not travel more than twenty feet from home. I can use flea powder, if need be, but the powder has not yet been invented which will keep out of my ears the song of chanticleer and the equally annoying cackle of the hen over the newly-laid egg. If my neighbor's dog offends me I have no recourse unless I can get others to join with me in a complaint. He may howl all night with impunity under my window, if no one else is near enough to be annoyed. The law makes no provision for barkless dogs or crowless roosters and while it does not specifically say that my neighbor may throw stones at me with impunity provided he stands more than twenty feet distant, it is equally idiotic in allowing him to hammer my ear drum from that distance, or in allowing his birds and beasts to do so.

I say nothing of the man who persists in informing me that he has fish for sale, the newsboy, the boy who regales me with his rendition of Tipperary and the thousand and one other noises which might and should be suppressed. It is doubtless inevitable that some noise must exist. But the law, so careful of the individual when his nose, his eye or his hide is concerned, should be equally solicitous for his ear. Some restraint should be imposed on the supposed right of ownership of the atmosphere, and those who wish to shout, drum, bang bells, toot horns, whistle, grind graphophones, screech with the windows open or in other ways commit assault on the ears of others, should be limited to actual necessity, or be en-

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closed in sound-proof cells with their own implements of torture. The regulation of sounds should be as much a province of the health department as the regulation of smells; assault by air waves should call for police interference quite as much as assault by any other weapon. When this is the case we shall hear much less of the "nervousness" which is in many cases the direct outcome of lack of rest for the hearing mechanism. Whatever may be said of the silent system in prisons, many of us wish, and all of us need some application of it in our daily lives. Not alone those whose duties compel them to work by night and sleep by day, but all who understand the difficulty of keeping step with our urban civilization would profit if needless irritation of the hearing mechanism could be avoided.

Correspondents For Negro Prisoners

I am not arguing the race question, nor am I asking anyone to do that which is not in accord with his professed principles. The practical point is this—which of you ladies and gentlemen who profess to believe in "brotherhood without distinction of race, creed, caste or color" and who meet together on Sunday and Wednesday evenings and talk piously about "killing out the sense of separateness" will give some tangible proof that you really mean what you say? Which of you will step forward and interest yourselves in just one of these men and women and so prove that your professions are not merely self-delusion?

We have perhaps fifty colored men and women on our waiting list who have appealed to us for correspondents. We have many more than that number of theosophists and of others who, while not theosophists, claim to believe about the same things, and with few exceptions they have turned a deaf ear to our repeated appeals. Is it any wonder that the public at large turns aside and concludes that a theosophist is a person with fine principles which he does not practise?

You are not asked to go out of your way to seek an opportunity, but one would think that with this opportunity before you you would be glad to put your professions to the test, instead of imitating that Levite who was so pleased with thinking of his God, and so careful of his robe of sanctity that he passed by on the other side of the road when his services were needed.

The inclination of some people to think that they can meet the Master on a basis of principles which they do not attempt to practise—except when agreeable—is enough to make an angel weep and a devil sneer.

New Thought Books. The revised list of New Thought books beginning with this issue has been printed entire and a copy will be sent on request.

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A Fetching Letter

Below is a copy of a letter which one of our members wrote to a New York daily, the result of which was to bring a considerable number of ardent prison workers into the LEAGUE. In view of this fact I think it would be a help to our prison work if you would send a copy of this letter, or at least something closely similar, to the newspapers of your city or district, or to religious papers. You could not choose a more taking caption than "Who Will Write to a Prisoner?'

Who Will Write to a Prisoner?

Editor of The ————————: Sir—Ours is a generous hearted country and the sympathy of our people is easily aroused when causes of distress are made known to them, giving abundantly of their dollars.

There is a form of distress to which few give a thought and for which I am asking something far more subtle than money. I am appealing in the cause of friendless prisoners to whom a word of sympathy and hope is more than all the dollars in the world. Every one knows how the so-called friends depart at the first sound of reverses and how quickly the world turns up its nose. Friends are good in prosperity, but who has not known the far greater value of a friend in adversity?

Who will be the agent of mercy and correspond with some of these friendless ones? Many today are earnestly asking for correspondents. Their names may be obtained from Dr. H. N. Stokes, The O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Prisoners' Waiting List

At this writing we have 159 prisoners who have asked for and are waiting for correspondents, as follows: U. S. Penitentiary, Atlanta, 11; California, Folsom, 9; California, San Quentin, 4; U. S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, 16; Maine, 1; Montana, 3; New York, Clinton, 3; New York, Sing Sing, 47; New York, Women's Prison, 12; Oregon, 1; Pennsylvania, Eastern State Penitentiary, 2; Texas, 1; Washington, 49.

Also about 75 more who desire additional correspondents, or who have been disappointed by their first correspondents neglecting them.

Universal Correspondence Club

This is not an advertisement. Mr. Seifert is one of the most active and valued members of the LEAGUE and I am glad to give him my personal endorsement. —*Editor of The Critic.*

Persons who wish to exchange correspondence on occult, religious, scientific, philosophic and kindred subjects are recommended to unite with this club. Address the Secretary, *Charles A. Seifert, 1809 Rudy Street, Harrisburg, Pa.*, with 25 cents membership fee. Particulars sent for self-addressd stamped envelope.

C. O. D. If preferred, you can have books sent by parcel post. C. O. D.

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Books Wanted

Babbitt—Principles of Light and Color.
Besant—The Pedigree of Man.
W. Marsham Adams—The Book of the Master.
G. R. S. Mead—Pistis Sophia; Orpheus.
Hartmann—In the Pronaos of the Temple.
Other Books by Hartmann.
P. B. Randolph—Love and the Master Passion, Ravalette, the Rosicrucian's Story. Dhoula Bel. After Death, the Disembodiment of Man.
Other books by Randolph.
Parsons—New Light on the Great Pyramid.
Skinner—Source of Measure.

Occult and New Thought books taken in exchange or for borrowing credit, after agreement on value.

Special Notice To Book Borrowers

Be sure to put your name on the package when you return books. Otherwise we cannot identify the sender and they will remain charged against you.

Bulletin of the Mutual Welfare League of Sing Sing. The subscription price has now been fixed at 50 cents a year, and it is one of the best of prison publications. *Address 354 Hunter Street, Ossining, N. Y.*

About Deposits. In place of cash deposits, we often accept occult or New Thought books, at a valuation to be agreed on, the amount being returnable in borrowing charges or in other books.

THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

Headquarters: 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

[List No. 7] New Thought; Mind Culture

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Discounts to lodges and dealers. Any book not on this list will be supplied, if possible.

All books may be rented, unless otherwise stated. Circulation not limited to O. E. Library League members.

Renting Terms. Two weeks or less, ten cents per volume; each additional week or fraction of a week, five cents per volume. Time in transit not charged. Cost of transportation both ways at borrower's expense. Books must be returned postpaid. Payment in advance by a deposit of two dollars (unless by special arrangement), the unused part being returned on request. Borrowed books may be purchased at the prices indicated or marked in them, without charge for postage, but five cents a week must be paid for all time in excess of two weeks. Borrowers may specify "reduced copies if available."

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

BY PROXY

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

—*James, iv; 17.*

You can vote by proxy, you can even get married by proxy, but there are many duties which, if performed by proxy, lead to but one result, that you reap your reward by proxy also. We may differ about the literal meaning of the word heaven, but I think we shall agree that whatever it is, it is a condition resulting from duty faithfully performed. Now, is it not reasonable that if you perform your duty by proxy, you will reap your reward, you will attain to heaven, by proxy also?

What are some of the ways of getting to heaven by proxy? We all remember how glorious it was, as children, to see the soldiers parade in nice new uniforms with shiny brass buttons, to listen to the martial music of the band and to watch the antics of the drum major, and we remember how we felt that we would gladly die—by proxy—for our country. We never entirely get over that feeling, no matter how old we may grow. But the monument has never yet been erected to him who would joyously let some other man fight. No, the laurels are for the soldier, not for the looker-on at the parade who feels his heart swell.

And when we go to church and hear the grand music of the organ, and listen to or join in the hymns, do we not feel how glorious it is to be a "Soldier of the Cross," a feeling which even the passing around of the collection plate is hardly able to dispel?

The brass band and the uniforms pass on; the boys return to their play. The church goer goes home to his Sunday dinner and forgets all about it. The boys become absorbed in their amusements and the grown-up becomes absorbed in his business, which is his pleasure, or in his pleasure, which is his business. But both of them retain the notion that the performance to which they have been witness is in some way creditable to themselves. They feel that they have acquired some merit by what the other fellow has done or is to do.

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And as Americans, we feel proud of the achievements of our nation, of our great men, our great institutions. We take credit to ourselves for that in which we have not taken the least part except as onlookers. We are great by proxy.

It is no very difficult matter, provided one has a reputation and is a good talker, to get together an audience to listen to a speech on some reform topic, let us say on prison reform. It is quite as easy as collecting a crowd of boys with a brass band and a display of uniforms. This without doubt is necessary. But what is pathetic about it is that those who get wonderfully enthusiastic and applaud what others are doing take it out in being enthusiastic. What a strange delusion, that you are helping the world's progress by feeling your heart throb over the doings of others! What a strange delusion, that you shed tears over the suffering and unfortunate, and straightway go to your comfortable home, to your pleasures, and forget all except the notion that in some way you have acquired merit! In that audience of a thousand people there may be a half-dozen who are really worked up to the point of doing something—the rest take it out in doing by proxy.

What is the actual fact? How about the merit you have acquired by letting the spirit bubble up within you and the tears roll down your cheeks?

I caution those who listen to such addresses that they are doing it at their peril. That you do not know of the suffering or the sin or the abuses which are going on around you may, or may not, be criminal ignorance. But the moment you do recognize them, the moment you allow one spark of enthusiasm over what others are doing to remedy them to arise within you, and do not forthwith go and do likewise, at that moment a responsibility has been thrust on you which you refuse to shoulder, at that moment a chance has been offered you which you decline—the chance of fighting as a soldier of humanity—and at that moment your ignorance departs and your sin takes its place.

What is sin? Well, I take it that sin is essentially the same as selfishness; it is doing that which you like rather than that which you ought to do and which you recognize should be done by somebody. Mind you, I am not talking against pleasure. The mind needs pleasure as much as it needs rest. Pleasure, like food, is needed in a certain amount to keep the spirit going efficiently. But like food, beyond the efficiency point it begins to disturb the spiritual liver and stomach: it then begins to be sin, no matter how "harmless" it is supposed to be. The proxy idea, the notion that someone else can do your duty for you, that someone else can save you, without your doing the utmost yourself, is a spiritual disease, just as much as jimjams is a disease of the brain bred by overindulgence. The proxy disease is worse than all of the diseases in the medical dictionary.

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Now, suppose you have heard one of those lectures on prison reform and have felt your sympathy aroused for those who are in prison. Suppose you have seen that here are men, bad enough, many of them, without doubt, but whom it is possible by proper treatment to make better. I know that there are those who think that such efforts are either wasted, or better spent in keeping men out of prison—quite a logical position, as soon as they are willing to let their own children or their wives who are suffering from tuberculosis go to the bow-wows while they devote their attention to stopping spitting in the street. But granted that something can be done to reclaim human wreckage—are you going to let the other fellow, the speaker, monopolize the credit of improving matters, or are you going to do something yourself? How can you do it? It is not everyone who can be a prison warden, or a state official, or a member of the legislature, but everybody can do something He can at least take a personal interest in one or two of these men, and in a way that will help him to his feet. I do not wish to speak disrespectfully of religion, and when it is of the right brand I think it is the biggest thing in the world, but I have absolutely no use for the proxy kind. Entirely too much attention is paid to what is called "saving the souls" of prisoners. I am deluged with tracts which I am asked to send to prisons, calling on the sinner to repent and turn to God. They all go into the wastebasket. I would be ashamed to be a party to telling a man, either in prison or out; "Oh, just turn to God if you want help." What do you imagine God put you here for? To amuse yourself and give free advice to others? Most of these men are in prison for doing just what you do yourself; for trying to get the most out of the world. They have not selected their methods as prudently as you have, but in general they are prompted by the same motives which prompt you; they are pretty much like yourself, barring your social advantages. I would be ashamed to tell tell a man to turn to God for help when I refuse to give it myself. We have turned religion inside out. Instead of recognizing the fact that we are God's proxies, we assume that God is our proxy. Instead of recognizing the fact that we rise to God by manifesting the Divine love in our own actions, we call on God to do the manifesting and go on with our little pleasures, or with our other pursuits which have our pleasure as an aim. That is doing one's duty by proxy with a vengeance.

No, the man in prison is just as keenly sensitive as you are, and far more discerning, and he sees the fallacy of the proxy idea much more quickly than you do. When you tell him that only God can save him and that it is really none of your business, he forms a very just idea of *your* religion and wants none of it. He sees that you know no more of God than he does, and you must carry your belief in the receptacle of brotherly love and kindness before he will taste it. And I agree with him..

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It is a reasonable assumption that you go to church now and then and have heard of one Jesus. Possibly your interest may have been aroused to the point of reading what he is reputed to have said and done—that is, if you have not been contented with information gleaned from the creed and the book of prayer. If so, it can hardly have escaped your notice that there was none of the proxy business about his methods. He never told those who came to him with their troubles or their faults that his Father would look after them or that the state would take care of them and that he was really too busy to take an interest in them. No, it was his keen personal interest, his feeling that all sinners were his brothers, that made him popular. It is not on record that he feared to associate with "delinquents," or that he advised killing them or sterilizing them, but it is on record that he had a very deep contempt for the man who preached religion while refusing to give aid to a wounded man.

If you have a religion, you cannot do better than eliminate the proxy idea at once. Do not leave to others, not even to God, to do what you can do yourself, unless you are willing to have the proxy treatment applied to you also. What was the reply to those who put in a claim for consideration on the ground that they had preached the gospel to many? Just this; "clear out; I never heard of you; it is those who have visited the sick and the prisoners who are my friends."

All of your enthusiasm over what others are doing, all of your applause of the speaker and your keen interest in what *he* is accomplishing, all of your horror, your cold chills, when you read of the wretched treatment which some prisoners are still getting, the boxes—so-called cells—in which they are locked up with less air space than the health authorities would tolerate in a factory, with sanitary arrangements which would not be allowed in a public toilet, all of these emotions are simply a count against you unless you take hold somewhere. You may not be able to give him more air, to replace his bucket with sanitary plumbing, to kill off the rats and tubercle bacilli which are his companions, but you can do this; you can show him that you are his brother; you can interest and cheer him even if you cannot do more, which you usually can. You do not have to indulge in sentimentality, you do not have to think or say you think he is being abused, but you can at least imitate the spirit of him whom you call your Master.

The proxy idea has been worked into religion—into all religions—for the comfort of those who want to believe in salvation by proxy without the trouble of doing anything themselves. "Just believe and you will be saved," that is the notion which has brought religion into discredit, and rightly, for a religion which tolerates proxy deserves to be discredited. The church has formulated a creed which contains I don't know how many "believes" and not a single "do."

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And the other cults follow in its footsteps. They set up Masters, to be adored, and disobeyed. Not one of them insists that the only way to reach the Master is by other ways than by seeking personal advancement of one sort or another. Sitting at the feet of the Master is popular, because sitting is a very easy occupation. But how many answer the call to get to work? A few, indeed, but fortunately an increasing number. But the rank and file are still asleep, dreaming over the possibility of salvation by proxy.

Letter From A Prisoner

Dr Stokes, March 2, 1916.

Dear Sir:—

I have heard of the good work done by your LEAGUE and would like to become a member of it. I am a young man 21 years of age. I had friends when I was on the outside but now they have all thrown me down. I would like someone to correspond with, for I think it cheers one up a bit.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I thank you for your kindness.

J. C.

Our Goat

Members who think they cannot contribute more to the support of our prison work than a ten cents registration fee, supposed to last for eternity, and a twenty-five cents a year subscription to the CRITIC, scarcely covering the cost, are invited to write to our office goat, with some really practical advice as to how he can subsist on such meagre diet and maintain his butting propensities. Information on concentrated foods and antiscorbutics is not solicited..

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK .....

for .....

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Wanted—Your Experience

We all know the person who is filled to the brim with reasons why things cannot be done or are not worth doing; we know the individual who proceeds on the principle that because now and then an apple is rotten, therefore all apples are worthless; we have heard of those who were sure of the impossibility of the steam engine, the telephone, the flying machine, and who decried the digging of the Panama Canal on the ground that the Gulf Stream would flow into the Pacific and that Europe would be glaciated.

The Editor of the CRITIC receives numerous communications from persons who raise theoretical objections to our plan of corresponding with prisoners without in the least knowing the facts. Here are some of them. The prisoner on his release will make a bee-line for the correspondent and rob or murder him; correspondents will marry the prisoners and raise a brood of defectives; prisoners are chronic liars, you can't count on a word they say; prisoners are not worth bothering with anyway—better become a prohibitionist, a socialist, a scientific agriculturist or a philanthropic lobbyist, or take part in an anti-dust or anti-spitting crusade. And so *ad infinitum.*

The Editor earnestly desires from members who have been corresponding with prisoners, frank and fearless statements of their own experience, brief and to the point, with the privilege of quoting anonymously in the CRITIC. They might state not only the effects on the prisoner, but on themselves as well. Nothing of a theoretical nature is desired.

Prisoners are earnestly invited to state their experiences likewise.

N. B. Those who wish to be particularly frank might state whether, if the relation has been unsatisfactory, the fault lies with the prisoner or with themselves.

A Huge Need For More Correspondents

At this writing we have 219 letters from prisoners who have begged us to find them correspondents, and whose requests we have not yet been able to meet. 86 of those are from Sing Sing and 49 from the Washington State Penitentiary.

Some of these are very pathetic and are from men who have not a friend in the world; some are from boys who are orphans.

Doesn't is seem preposterous that people enough cannot be found to take an interest in these men, to the extent of writing them a few letters and helping them to feel that there is something really worth living for and that the iron grip of the law has not shut them out forever from the human sympathy which you yourself demand?

What surprises me is that members of the LEAGUE do not exert themselves more to interest others. "I have talked to my

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friends," says one. Yes, but haven't you any letters which you can read to them without breach of confidence? Don't be satisfied with telling them how interesting it is—so is the newspaper. If you want to interest your friend in anything bring him face to face with it; don't be satisfied with *telling* him.

You are earnestly invited to communicate to the Editor any plans which may have occurred to you.

Where to Buy Books—Books for Prisoners

Members who desire to send new books to prisoners are invited to order them through the LEAGUE rather than elsewhere. The LEAGUE gets the usual dealer's commission in such cases, which goes to the furtherance of its work.

THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

Headquarters: 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

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Published biweekly at 1207 Q St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V Wednesday, April 5, 1916 No. 17

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THE NIGGER IN THE WOODPILE

I desire to pay my respects to an extraordinary misleading, dangerous and reactionary proposition now under consideration by Congress. Have patience with me through the few introductory technicalities.

Several bills are before Congress which have as their aim the regulation of interstate commerce in goods produced by prison labor. I quote one of these *verbatim;* the others are practically identical. Mr. Booher's bill, H. R. 6871, reads as follows:

A Bill to limit the effect of the regulation of interstate commerce between the States in goods, wares and merchandise wholly or in part manufactured, mined, or produced by convict labor or in any prison or reformatory.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all goods, wares, and merchandise manufactured, produced, or mined wholly or in part by convict labor, or in any prison or reformatory, transported into any State or Territory of the United States, or remaining therein for use, consumption, sale, or storage, shall, upon arrival and delivery in such State or Territory, be subject to the operation and effect of the laws of such State or Territory to the same extent as though such goods, wares, and merchandise had been manufactured, produced, or mined in such State or Territory, and shall not be exempt therefrom by reason of being introduced in the original package or otherwise.

By way of explanation attention may be called to the fact that the Supreme Court has decided that no state law could interfere with the importation into and sale in that state of goods produced in other states, provided that they are imported and sold in the "original package," unless Congress by special act shall limit the interstate commerce law in the particular instance. Thus, as is well known, liquor could be and has been sold in prohibition states in defiance of state law and public opinion, provided it was sold in the "original package," which might be nothing more than a pint bottle. In that pioneer prohibition state, Maine, the writer has purchased openly and without question pint bottles of liquor.

Thirteen of the states have laws intended in one way or another to limit or regulate the manufacture and sale of prison products, and while they are able to do this effectively so far as such articles are produced within the state, they have been helpless when

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they have been brought in from other states and sold in the "original package." The result has been practically to nullify the action of the state law.

Let us see how this works. Prison labor is in the majority of cases nothing more than slave labor. The state takes possession of the bodies of men who have been convicted of an offense against the law and puts them to work either in factories owned by the state, or in mines, or by hiring them out to contractors. The man himself is a slave, nothing more, because he is compelled to work, willy-nilly, for absolutely nothing more than his board and lodging, or at best is allowed a ridiculous pittance—a cent and a half a day in New York, for instance. He is exactly in the position of the negro slave, and worse, because he is locked up, often chained up, over night, instead of being allowed to amuse himself in his leisure hours. As a matter of course goods produced in this way can be sold at a lower price than those made by men who receive a reasonable wage, and they are often dumped on the market at any price they will bring, sufficient to cover the cost of production or to allow a margin of profit to the state or to the slave-driving contractor, and in some cases entirely forcing the product of free labor out of the market. It is stated that certain industries have been entirely ruined by the competition of prison made goods, and the free laborers driven to seek other employment. Where the demand for a certain product made in prisons is limited, it is obvious that the ruination of private industry in this line is limited only by shortage in the supply of convicts.

The recent report of the Committee on Labor of the House of Representatives enumerates several industries which have now been wholly or almost monopolized by prisons. It further points out that there is very little use in teaching a convict a trade in prison, if, on his discharge, he finds that outside production in this line has been ruined and that his past experience and training are of no use to him.

We may differ as to the exact meaning of "reasonable profit" or "reasonable wages," but I think we may safely assume that the laborer ought to get, not merely enough to keep body and soul together, but enough to enable him to lay by something for old age, after supporting those dependent on him. It is also reasonable to assume that the employer of labor shall do the same. Now, when the state segregates a considerable body of men—and it matters not the least whether they are good church members or yeggmen—and makes them work for nothing more than bare food, lodging and clothing, and then dumps their products on the market in competition with those who have a right to demand a "reasonable" surplus for their labor over necessary living expenses, then that may properly be considered unfair competition. Of course in our contempt for the offender we have assumed that he has no rights whatever.

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but granting that for the moment, still, other people have. Granted that it is the duty of the state to restrain the wrong-doer, still, it has not the right to use him as a tool for pauperizing others and bringing them eventually to like condition.

In their efforts to do away with the unfair competition of prison slave labor, the labor unions have secured the enactment of various measures intended to remedy the situation. In some states prisoners are not allowed to be employed in productive pursuits, in others the number who may work is limited. Until recently Pennsylvania allowed only thirty-five per cent of its convicts to be employed in trades. The balance either twiddled their thumbs or killed time in other ways, or were employed in various jobs about the prison. In other states convicts are employed on public works, notably in road making, while in others what is known as the state use system has been adopted. According to this system prison made goods are to be sold to state institutions only. Nothing could be more absurd. Schools, asylums, prisons and public offices are not established for the purpose of being depositories for chairs, beds, tables or desks. The orphans after all cannot use up more than so many pairs of shoes a year—they are not there for the object of wearing out shoes and keeping prisoners employed. The charwoman who sweeps out the governor's office is not there for the purpose of wearing out brooms. Only a limited amount of such things can be used in state institutions, and even if they were able to take up the whole supply of the prisons, still, *every bed, table, broom or shoe bought from a prison means one less made by the free laborer.* Of all economic humbugs the state use system is the most absurd, and it is difficult to see how it could have been adopted with any other notion than that of deluding the free laborer and keeping him quiet for the time being—and incidentally capturing his vote. And as for the employment of convicts on roads, does not every convict so employed exclude a free laborer who would be glad to have the job? In every state there are thousands of men begging for work. The state will not employ them at a reasonable wage, but employes what is nothing but slave labor in their place.

The whole thing boils itself down to this. Whenever a state employs prison slave labor, that is, unpaid or underpaid labor under compulsion, no matter in what capacity, it is competing unfairly with the free laborer. There is not and never can be any solution to the prison labor problem as long as slave labor is tolerated. It is a crime to be placed on the even with permitting negro slavery, or with allowing the child to work for a few cents a day in the factories, sacrificing its future for the present profit of some mill owner. No matter if you are so benighted as to think that the man who has slipped up has no rights whatever, that you may not only restrain him but take possession of him body and soul and make a

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slave of him, still the eternal laws of justice will not let you off. The community which tolerates slave labor will have to contend with the pauperism which its policy causes.

There can be no solution of the problem until it is recognized that putting a man behind prison walls does not give the right to enslave him; there can be no solution other than paying the prison laborer the same wages—less cost of maintenance—as he would get for the same grade of employment elsewhere. The competition of prison labor would then be nothing more than the normal competition of free man with free man, to which no one can object. The markets would cease to be disturbed by products of slave labor; the prisoner would be taught to be self-respecting; he would have an incentive to work, and be so much the more efficient, the more a man.

Some states are already experimenting with the wage problem for prisoners, and it must of necessity be a matter for experimentation. But if it appears that the state is actually making a profit, or that it is underselling free made goods in the open market, then it is evidence that the wage scale is too low. The community has no more right to make a profit out of the men whom it is compelled to confine than it has to send out a police squad Saturday nights and hold up free workmen and relieve them of a portion of their week's wages for the benefit of the state treasury. It is highway robbery, nothing less.

To return to interstate commerce. Just as a prohibition law can be largely nullified in effect when the interstate commerce laws allow liquor to be imported in original packages, so, no matter how wise the prison labor laws of a state may be, no matter if prison slave labor is replaced by a rational wage system, still they can be only partly beneficial as far as the public is concerned if other states, still adhering to slave labor, are allowed to dump their products on its market.

The professed aim of the proposed legislation is to allow each state to protect itself by permitting it to apply its own laws to imported prison made products. Now, if the effect could be limited to preventing states which maintain a body of prison slaves from forcing their cheap slave made products on other states, in competition with paid labor, no objection could be raised. But it does much more than that. It allows any state to exclude prison made goods, even if made under ideal conditions, even if the prisoner is fully paid for his labor. That is to say, it is a sweeping discrimination against the prisoner as such—a piece of class legislation of the worst sort.

Suppose that in legislating against "negro slavery" we should omit the word "slavery," and make our laws apply to negroes without discrimination—that is an exact parallel of what we have here. Congress has limited the interstate commerce law in respect to arti-

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cles which no one can dispute are detrimental to public health and welfare, impure foods, adulterated drugs, whiskey. But here is quite another matter. It is now proposed to allow any state to discriminate against articles produced by prisoners in other states, no matter how good these articles may be in themselves. It is legislation, not against a certain class of goods, but against a certain class of men, namely, convicts. Prison made goods are not in themselves dangerous to public welfare, like whiskey, impure foods or articles fraudulently labeled. On the contrary they are just as honest as the same things made by the outsider, provided they are made by honest and fair methods, and are just as entitled to the protection of the interstate commerce law. To allow a state to exclude them at will is not one whit more sensible than to allow it to exclude wheat or potatoes because the farmers demand it. Why not? If the farmers control the legislature they could easily stop outside competition and doubtless would, did not the interstate commerce law stand in their way.

On effect of the proposed legislation will be to make it the harder for those states which may hereafter adopt a rational wages system for prisoners to find a broad market for their products, and therefore to pay them rational wages. The measure is fundamentally wrong—no matter what good it may do here and there, and should be defeated.

What is really needed is the prohibtion of interstate commerce in prison products when it shall appear that the prisoner is not paid, or is underpaid, for his labor, or that the state is making a profit out of him. For such a law would be just this—a law to prohibit interstate commerce in the products of slave labor. This would quickly bring those states to their senses which still think the convict a person whom they may exploit with impunity. Under such an act, the decision as to whether the goods are fairly made or not would be a function of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Sing Sing's Token Money

Dear Dr. Stokes:— March 22, 1916

I am anxious to have you interested in the Token Money system now in vogue in Sing Sing, and also to have your friends interested.

If any of them will write to me I will be glad to reply, and send them some very interesting matter regarding the coinage we used in prison. This is the only prison in the United States where each and every man receives a salary, and a description of the way he saves it is, I think, well worth while.

Sincerely,
ISAAC RAINS

354 Hunter Street
Ossining, N. Y.

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Should Young People Correspond With Prisoners?

As several persons have represented to me that it is improper and hazardous for young ladies to correspond with prisoners, I asked a high school girl of nineteen as to her experience and received the following reply:

"I rather timidly took up the LEAGUE work, but my experience has been very reassuring. I have found the correspondence not only not dangerous but beneficial. I am under the impression that the prisoner is a gentleman. Further, I would trust him even more quickly than many men at large. I find that he responds readily to whatever side of his nature is touched on. I mold the character of his letters by my own. The disinterested friendship of a young lady friend puts the man on his honor to prove himself worthy of her trust and the more quickly since he knows the value of true friendship from his lack of friends. It develops in him a new self-respect and, when he is free, begets a new courage to face the world."

Another of about the same age writes: "It all depends on the attitude of mind. If it is begun as I have begun there is no cause for fear. If it is begun 'for an adventure' or some trivial reason then I would be dubious about the outcome. Whoever writes from a desire to cheer, comfort and encourage—and writes wisely—can rest sure that all will go well."

Who Will Write To A Prisoner?

Do your thoughts ever turn to those who have forfeited their liberty, on account of having broken some man-made law? Do you know that the fact they are in prison in most instances deprives them not only of their liberty, but everything pertaining to it, such as friendly, human interest, a cheerful and cheering word, a little encouragement, in short, all the little things which really make life worth living? Do you doubt what the inevitable effect of human sympathy, good-will and a little kindness towards them will be?

If you are interested to the extent of desiring to know how you, at the expense of a few minutes of your time occasionally, may help some fellow creature make his mere existence more bearable, his future brighter, and inspire him with new courage and hope of success upon his release—write to our friends of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE, 1207 Q St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

A PRISONER.

Membership in the O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC (obligatory on members) 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired.

Names of prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

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Our Goat

A would-be correspondent vigorously resents paying 35 cents dues to the LEAGUE. He says he is for Christ, and Christ never charged for His services. What surprises us is that he does not take us for Christ, as he demands that we feed a multitude of five thousand men on five loaves and two fishes. Just as soon as the Robe of Divinity falls on us, we will undertake to run a five thousand dollar a year work on the same principle.

One Way To Help The League

You are probably a book buyer, more or less. It is a fact, which has perhaps not occurred to you, that every book you buy through the LEAGUE probably makes at least one prisoner happy, and may change the whole course of his life for the better. The same is true of every subscription for the CRITIC which you send us.

A Business Man's Library

For sale, a set of the famous *Business Man's Library,* in ten volumes, published by System Magazine, $10.00 (price new, $29).

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One of the best books on the subject.

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V | Wednesday, April 19, 1916 | No. 18

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

DEMANDING A SIGN

There is a story in the Bible about certain men who demanded a "sign" from Christ as authority for His teachings. These gentlemen, who occupied the highest seats in the synagogue, were quite willing to accept—theoretically—the doctrine of doing to others as you would be done by, on condition that some irrelevant miracle should be performed. They were victims of the delusion of the ages that power over the forces of nature necessarily makes its possessor a moral authority likewise, and they were quite too obtuse to perceive that that which is worth doing in itself has no need of a sign to back it up. The reply they got was that if they wanted to know the truth of the teaching they should try it for themselves instead of asking for authority. Asking for references may be necessary in business affairs, but in the moral world it is quite otherwise. Here the rule holds: "Try it for yourself." Here the criterion is and must necessarily be personal experience, not what others say or do.

The Editor often receives communications from those who are willing to make the personal acquaintance of prisoners at first hand on certain conditions, to wit, that they receive information as to who is back of our work, who pays the bills,whether it is endorsed by this, that or the other person or association, what the social standing or religious opinions of the members are, and other irrelevant matters. All of which is very funny; quite as funny as refusing to aid a drowning man or to help put out a fire until the *bona fides* of the person who gave the alarm has been established; quite as absurd as asking whether he is recognized by the fire department or the life saving service, or is admitted by these to be competent to judge whether the fire is worth putting out or the drowning man worth pulling out of the water; quite as irrational as insisting that the character or social standing of others who are trying to help shall be established.

If I were asking you to do something for me personally, you would be right in asking my references, but when I ask you to interest yourself in a man in prison, with whom I have no personal relation whatever—and at your own suggestion too—and you reply by asking for my references, you are putting yourself in precisely

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the attitude of the Pharisees who demanded a sign. Whether I am a fool for taking an interest in prisoners may be a matter of opinion, but I should certainly have to admit myself a fool if I assented to your demand for references. Either the thing is worth doing or it is not—that you can only determine for yourself by actual trial. If it is not, even my power to call lightning from heaven would not make it so; if it is, then by showing a sign would be superfluous. I have but one sign for those who insist on it, "the sign of the Prophet Jonas." Their communications are chucked overboard and are swallowed into the belly of my wastebasket.

And then there are those who are perhaps a degree more rational. These demand demonstration in advance that their time, paper and ink will not be wasted. They wish proof that the prisoners' letters are not lies; they insist that those who state their own experience shall show that they are not simply being hoodwinked by cunning criminals. Show them a letter from a prisoner and the reply is "How do you know he is not lying? Don't we know that the worst criminals can write the most beautiful letters? What guarantee can you give that you are not being imposed on?" Surely we can give none. Prisoners may lie, but so may others; even church deacons have been known to rob banks by methods quite as effective as using dynamite or a jimmy. If you are so dreadfully afraid of being fooled there is but one place for you—the wilderness. Every day you are taking vastly greater risks than in this small matter, and with much less hullabaloo; every day you trust people of whose moral insides you know absolutely nothing, who have much greater incentive for cheating you did they wish to, and of whom the most you can say is that their turn in prison has not yet come. And after all, is it not better to risk being fooled by a man who is safely lodged behind prison walls than by an outsider who is really in a position to do mischief?

But let us consider a few points. Most men are in prison because they have broken some law. They are there partly for the object of protecting society, partly for the purpose of reforming them. There is also an antiquated notion that they are there for punishment—that is, for the purpose of getting back at them, of repaying evil with evil. They are of all kinds, many of them bad enough without doubt, and hopeless enough from the common standpoint, but few of them are entirely devoid of that spark of manhood, loyalty and honor which can be fanned into a flame. The fact remains; they are there, and the question is not "how bad are they?" but "is it worth while to try to make something of them?" Considering the fact that with few exceptions these men will be turned loose sooner or later, is it better to turn them loose as bad, as or worse than when they were jugged, or to try to make them better? If so, should not the effort be made at once?

All of this is now generally admitted and plans without end

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are being tried to prepare the prisoner for freedom. But each and every one of them labors under this disadvantage. To cause the flower of probity to bloom we remove the offender from society, where, it must be admitted, he has many evil associations, but where it is possible for him to form endless good ones also, and we place him in close confinement where his only companions are those of like mind with himself; we take him from possible good influences and limit him to almost exclusively bad ones. The youth who has committed his first offense, almost ignorantly, is brought into intimate association with the old and hardened offender; he may even share the same cell with him and listen to his stories of evil adventure. Imprisonment means isolation from good, but not from bad influences; on the contrary it intensifies them. Locking up sinners together, with sinners as their only associates, is certainly a novel way of promoting virtue, yet that is exactly the method we are following at present. And then, when the man is discharged and backslides, instead of kicking ourselves for having kept him for years in a moral pesthouse, we talk about confirmed criminals, indulge in a lot of psychological tommyrot and even propose to sterilize him. And add to this that many prisons restrict intercourse with the outside world to a minimum. They not only confine the body, which is necessary at times, but they confine the mind also, by limiting letter writing, or by placing restrictions on the receipt of good literature. There are but twelve states which do not limit the number of letters a prisoner may write, sometimes to one a month, very generally to one a week, and even in some of those which do not restrict letter writing it is impossible to send a good book to a prisoner unless it comes direct from the publisher. You may have books which you would be glad to give, but you are not allowed to. There are reasons for this of course; inspection would be made more difficult; drugs or knives might be smuggled in and the time of the officials would be taken up in hunting for them. So books are excluded, but at what a cost!

Prisoners are subject to the same psychological laws as you and I are. If you and I would be injured by constant association with evil, to the exclusion of good companionship, so also will be the prisoner. If you and I are benefited by intercourse with pure minds, so also will be the prisoner. Look for that which is best in yourself and the chances are you will find it came from the inspiration of a friend. Books you may have read, sermons you may have heard, but after all, that which drives the nail home is the personal touch of sincere friendship. For this reason every relation with outside people who are in themselves fit and proper is likely to be of benefit to the prisoner, and even if it does no more than divert him, if it does no more than break the monotony of his isolation, afford him innocent enjoyment and prevent him from becoming moody and resentful, it is worth while.

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It is useless to demand a sign. The proof is the personal experience of those who have tried it, and that you can get only for yourself. If you do not find it after seeking, before you blame the prisoner, first ask whether the fault does not lie in yourself.

"But the prisoner is a chronic liar." No such thing. Doubtless many a prisoner claims to be innocent when he knows he is guilty, and when he does so you may well ask whether you are not at fault by giving him the impression that you are his friend only because you think him innocent. If you go into prison correspondence with the idea of writing to the innocent and avoiding the guilty you should find something else to do, for you are simply giving an incentive to deceive you. I venture to say that in your relations with your fellows outside you are just as anxious to make a good appearance as is the prisoner, and that you cover up your faults just as carefully even if you do not actually falsify. Don't give the incentive for untruthfulness and you are unlikely to be deceived. Consider that every letter a prisoner writes is officially inspected, and you will see that the lying game cannot be carried very far, even at worst. When the prisoner professes religion, you can place the same value on his statements as you would on those of anybody else, neither more or less. But when he tells you that he craves better companionship, when he says he longs for the feminine influence, he states what is a fact of human nature. I don't have to charge him with deceit when he shows just the same emotions which I feel within myself. If I admit that I have suffered through lack of the benign maternal influence, isn't it rather silly for me to call the prisoner a liar when he tells me the same? Which is worse, to be deceived by trusting too much, or to deceive yourself by trusting too little? It is trust which open the doors of the heart, but doubt leads nowhere.

Do you want to know why Christ chose the sinners rather than the righteous for his companions? The reason you will find if you will interest yourself in the prisoner as a man. You will learn more about the real meaning of Christianity from these men than from all the books, the doctors and the preachers. But you must learn it for yourself. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

The O. E. Library Critic is owned and published bi-weekly by the O. E. Library League, at 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Editor and Manager, H. N. Stokes, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

This paper has no bondholders, mortgagees, or other security holders.

(Signed) H. N. Stokes, *Editor.*

Sworn and subscribed before me April 5th, 1916.

Frank B. Tipton, *Notary Public.*

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Letter From A Correspondent

Dear Dr. Stokes:— New York, April 5, 1916

I desire to express my personal appreciation of correspondence with prisoners as conducted under the auspices of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE. It gives me pleasure to state that I consider the prisoners with whom I have been in correspondence for some months past to be men of noble character, intelligent minds and affectionate hearts, who through unfortunate circumstances and environment, evil companions, and perhaps more than anything else, ignorance and lack of training for which they were not responsible, went astray and yielded to temptation. They have responded—in one case, eagerly—to my efforts to befriend and help them, and to inspire them with fresh hope, higher ideals and the desire to improve, and I cannot feel too thankful that I took up the work. Being under the shadow of a great bereavement when I began the correspondence, I can testify to the cheer and pleasure it has brought to my own heart, proving indeed that those who bring sunshine to the lives of others, cannot keep it from themselves.

Sincerely yours,

M. S.

Letter From A Prisoner

Dr. H. N. Stokes, March 25, 1916

My dear Friend:—

. . . My education is rather limited as my school days were cut short by the death of my parents when I was fourteen. Since then I have been drifting along, alone and friendless and penniless. I do hope you will find a correspondent for me soon, for I am the only one in my cell of six inmates who has no correspondent. If people could only know how a letter from the outside world would cheer us and make our burdens lighter, surely someone will write me. . . .

Hoping and trusting that my turn on the list from this prison will come soon. . . .

With regards and respect,

R. M. H.

The Blind Prisoner of Sing Sing

One of our members, Charles Simmons, has recently been discharged from Sing Sing Prison. He is totally blind and there is no chance of his recovering his sight. He is dependent on his own efforts for a living. It is proposed to start him with a small newsstand in New York City and a collection was recently taken up among the officials and inmates of Sing Sing for this purpose, to which Mr. Osborne and Dr. Kirchwey contributed.

Any of our readers who can help this unfortunate man to get

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A List of Prison Newspapers

The study of the prison newspaper, written and edited by prisoners, is indispensable to an understanding of a very important side of prison reform, the convict himself. *Subscriptions and inquiries should be sent to the addresses given.* Arranged alphabetically according to states.

Good Words; monthly. U. S. Penitentiary, Atlanta, Ga. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Bulletin; monthly. Organ of the San Quentin Agricultural Club, San Quentin Prison, Calif. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

Industrial School Magazine; monthly. State Industrial School for Boys. Golden, Colo. One year, 50 cts., half-year, 25 cts., copies, 5 cts.

The Chronicle; monthly. Connecticut State Reformatory, Cheshire, Conn. 50 cts. a year.

The Monthly Record; monthly. Connecticut State Prison, Wethersfield, Conn. 50 cts. a year; 25 cts. for 6 months; copy, 5 cts.

The Joliet Prison Post; quarterly. Illinois State Penitentiary, Joliet, Ills. $1.00 a year; copy, 25 cts.

The Pioneer; weekly. State Reformatory, Pontiac, Ills. 50 cts. a year; 25 cts. for 6 months; copy, 5 cts.

The Reflector; weekly. State Reformatory, Jeffersonville, Ind. 50 cts. a year; 15 cts. for 3 months.

Reformatory Press; weekly. State Reformatory, Anamosa, Iowa. 75 cts. a year.

Leavenworth New Era; weekly. U. S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Reformatory Herald; weekly. Kansas State Industrial Reformatory, Hutchison, Kansas. 50 cts. a year.

The Square Deal; weekly. Kansas State Penitentiary, Lansing, Kansas. 50 cts. a year.

Stray Shots; weekly. U. S. Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. No subcriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Mirror; weekly. Minnesota State Prison, Stillwater, Minn. $1.00 a year; 25 cts. for 6 months.

The Reformatory Pillar; monthly. State Reformatory, St. Cloud, Minn. 50 cts. a year.

The Better Citizen; bi-weekly. State Reformatory, Rahway, N. J. 50 cts. a year.

The Bulletin; weekly. Organ of *The Mutual Welfare League,* Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, N. Y. 50 cts. a year.

The Star of Hope; bi-weekly. $2.50 a year. Organ of the five New York State prisons. Published at Sing Sing Prison, Ossining, N. Y.

The Summary; weekly. State Reformatory, Elmira, N. Y. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

The Reflector; monthly. State Penitentiary, Bismarck, North Dakota. 50 cts. a year; 30 cts. for 6 months.

The Ohio Penitentiary News; weekly. Columbus, Ohio. 50 cts. a year.

Lend A Hand; monthly. Oregon State Penitentiary, Salem, Oregon. $1.00 a year; 25 cts. for 3 months; copy, 10 cts.

The Umpire; weekly. Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia, Pa. No subscriptions. Inquire of editor.

Reformatory Record; weekly. Penna. Industrial Reformatory, Huntingdon, Pa. 50 cts. a year.

The Prison Monitor; monthly. Vermont State Prison, Windsor, Vermont. $1.00 a year; 50 cts. for 6 months.

Our View Point; monthly. Washington State Penitentiary, Walla Walla. Wash. $1.00 a year; 50 cts. for 6 months.

The Index; weekly. State Reformatory, Monroe, Wash. 50 cts. a year.

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BY

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE OSBORNE IDEA

The name of Thomas Mott Osborne is on the lips of every one who takes the least interest in prison reform, but how many know what the Osborne Idea really is? Even the newspapers, which either laud or deride him, seldom give the public an idea of what he stands for. According to their trend he is praised for his humane methods or derided for "coddling," but you can read the papers week in and week out without getting at the root of the matter. The Osborne Idea is not in the humane treatment of prisoners, for prisoners have been treated humanely in some prisons *before*. It is not in good lodging, for few convicts are worse housed than in Sing Sing, which has about the worst and most insanitary cell system to be found anywhere. It is not in good feeding or in proper sanitation, for there are other prisons where the food is as good and where the greatest care is taken of the health of the inmates. It is not in amusements, for allowing the prisoner to have recreation in the form of sports, theatricals and music is by no means uncommon. Neither is it in the much talked of honor system, for in several prisons the men, or at least the better ones, are allowed to work outside without guard and with nothing but their self-respect and word of honor to prevent their escape. Nor is it in better education, in technical training, for these are not unusual.

You may have all of these things; you may house your prisoner in quarters like a first-class hotel, you may take the locks off the cell doors, you may pull down the wall, you may do away with the guards and leave him with practically nothing but his word of honor to prevent his running away, you may provide him with the best education, you may teach him a trade, you may pay him decent wages, you may parole him when he gives the least indication of being able to behave, you may secure him a first-class job on his release, you may do all of these and much more and you will still be far from the kernel of the Osborne Idea.

The Osborne Idea is, that no matter how well you may treat the convict, no matter what material and mental advantages you may give him, you can never really fit him for freedom except through

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the practice of freedom, that you can never prepare him for self-control and self-government except by training him in self-control and self-government, and that this training must start from the day of his incarceration. It is idle to think that by treating him like a blue ribbon poodle he can ever be made over into a man.

The Osborne Idea is just this—development through self-government. In Sing Sing the men practically govern themselves; it is the Junior Republic idea applied to grown-ups. There is another state prison in New York, the Great Meadow Prison, which does not even have a wall around it. The inmates are all on their honor not to escape, and they respect it. But here the men are under what may be called a system of beneficent paternalism. They are well cared for, they are trusted, but they are not taught to govern themselves. All they have to do is to obey the rules laid down for them by others—no chance for initiative. And the same applies more or less to all of the best conducted penal institutions in the land; they are run on a system of beneficent paternalism; often the men are not even allowed to think for themselves; they must assimilate the mental or spiritual food which the officials think proper.

In Sing Sing the men practically govern themselves. The famous Mutual Welfare League of Sing Sing has various objects, but the main one is self-government. It stands quite apart from the various associations of prisoners in other institutions, which have the mental and moral training of the members as their aim; it is self-governing in a much broader sense. The Mutual Welfare League practically has the discipline of the prison in its hands. Those who break the prison rules are not, at least in most cases, brought before the warden; they are accountable to the League, which fixes its own penalties and enforces them without interference. The League has its own court where offenders against discipline are tried and sentenced. The discipline in the cell block, in the shops, about the grounds, is in the hands of the League. The old-time guard is practically replaced by the Sergeant-at-Arms of the League and his assistants, themselves prisoners. And since this system has been introduced not only have there been fewer violations of rules, fewer attempts to escape, fewer cases of insanity than ever before in the history of Sing Sing, but also the *per capita* output in the shops has increased greatly.

How can one judge whether a prisoner is fitted for freedom? Most of the states have their parole laws; prisoners whose record of behavior is good are liberated conditionally. But with what preparation! Just this; several years of confinement under a system which, no matter how kindly, is pure paternalism. The present parole laws are radically defective in this, that they lay great stress on good behavior, but none whatever on initiative; they emphasize obedience to that which is without, but do not provide for the higher

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obedience which comes from within. Think of this, please. Obedience, while a valuable trait, is a very negative sort of virtue when the subject has every motive for obeying and none for disobeying. Prison is a very easy place to behave, and good behavior means very little when it is prompted by nothing more than the desire to avoid punishment and to make a good showing before the parole board. That good conduct which has no deeper root than this is pretty sure to wither when the eyes of the officials are removed and the man is again exposed to the hazards and temptations of the outside world. Unless it is rooted in the conviction that proper manhood demands it, it is of only temporary value. Prison under the paternal system is about the easiest place in the world to make a good record because there is practically no exposure to temptation and every motive of a shallow sort to behave. Yet it is on this record that the man is given his parole.

The Osborne Idea is to train the men in self-control and self-government from the very first, instead of leaving it to the time when, of all times, it is most difficult, when he has been thrust out into the world without means and usually friendless.

Doesn't that strike you as common sense?

The progress of the Mutual Welfare League will be watched with interest. Its path is not devoid of dangers. Man is a rule-making animal; when he has nothing else to do he makes laws. Will the League fall into the same line and defeat its own object by interminable rule making with appropriate penalties for disobedience, or will it develop fully the idea of its founder and seek rather to evolve in its members that which can be the only real basis of morality—manhood governed by common sense, justice and a due consideration for the feelings and rights of others?

(Those who are interested in this notable experiment in manhood making can get full information from the weekly *Bulletin* of the Mutual Welfare League, 354 Hunter Street, Ossining, N. Y. 50 cents a year.)

The O. E. Library League Idea

What the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE Idea is most of our readers know. As an illustration I present a letter recently received from a prisoner, which speaks for itself. I may add that the truth of the incident narrated is confirmed by the correspondent of the inmate mentioned. The criticism of the outside correspondent is entirely just and is supported by experience. I am convinced that in the majority of cases where our method has not produced satisfactory results it is the fault of the outside correspondent rather than of the prisoner. Every day brings us pathetic complaints from prisoners that their correspondents are neglecting them. It is no exaggeration to say that in four out of five cases the fault lies with the outside member.

——————— Penitentiary,

Dear Dr. Stokes:— April 15, 1916.

In your last issue of the CRITIC you ask for opinions concerning the work and good the LEAGUE is accomplishing.

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It is now nearly a year since I became a member of the LEAGUE and since then I have done everything within my power to further its interests. To be a member of a league such as the one of which you are the head is indeed a pleasure that even ten short years ago would have been looked upon by both freeman and prisoner with suspicion. Today, in my opinion, you are accomplishing a line of reform work which otherwise could not be accomplished. The CRITIC sets forth the dire needs to the public and the prisoner reaps the harvest in cherished correspondence. If the outside members could see the glad smile upon the faces of their brothers behind the walls when they receive a letter, it would be not only a comfort, but would strengthen their desire to do more. A letter, properly written, reaches the depths of the hardened man's heart, it stays with him, it sets him to thinking, it commands the best there is in him to rise up and do better, even more so than a sermon verbally spoken, it sends a feeling of gladness deep into the soul of the fallen to know, beyond the shadow of doubt, that there is someone, in the great outside world, who is willing to share a little of their time from pressing business affairs, to try and cast a luminous ray of sunshine through the great iron gates and into an all too drear cell. The efforts of the great outside are not lost. The seeds of undying friendship are being sown day by day as the public more readily realizes its duty toward fallen humanity. The hours, which to many prisoners were all too much like days, are now turned into jeweled thoughts. The inspirations to higher, nobler deeds take root and the man behind the walls ceases to be morbid and careless.

Ofttimes the men come to me with probably the first letter they have received in years. One incident I recall very clearly. A certain man, without friends, asked me how to get a correspondent in the LEAGUE. He was very bitter against everything and everybody in general, but what seemed to me the most deplorable condition, he had lost confidence in himself. He actually was so pessimistic as to declare that he never expected to have another day of freedom, never to have another friend in the outside world and that no one would give him, an "ex-con," a job, and furthermore as much as said that he didn't believe anyone would ever take enough interest to write him a letter. I furnished him with a membership blank, made no promises, but asked what he would like to correspond about. "General educational lines," he suggested. He filled out the blank and it was forwarded. Several week passed, several times he ventured to say "I told you so." One morning, however, while in the dining room at breakfast he was sitting several tables away from me, but he caught my eye and then frantically flourished a letter. On the next Saturday we were on the grounds and I had just finished lighting my pipe when he buttonholed me and happily shoved two letters into my hand while his one exclamation was, "By God there's life in the old world yet." The one letter was

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from you, the other from his surprisingly prompt correspondent. This incident is only one of the many. Some of the men are studying because of their lack of being able to write intelligently on interesting topics, some have already gone out from the prison world with added determination to go the right way, because of being inspired and convinced that it pays to go straight.

But there is one thing, one essential, lacking on the part of the outside correspondent and that is "stick-to-it-iveness." Prisoners can find lots of places to write to if it is only to bother some mail order house for a catalog, but they don't want to carry on a one-sided correspondence. Many of the men here, and I suppose elsewhere, forget that everyone in the outside world has a living to make, but if the correspondent would just take ten minutes of his or her time weekly they would accomplish more than by working in fits and starts. The prisoner, in most cases, is considerate and there are very few of them who are not gentlemanly, but they want, need, and must have encouragement such as only whole-hearted letters can give and accomplish.

There is one great mistake made by outside LEAGUE members, and that is sending money to prisoners. It hurts the most hardened criminal to have money shoved at him, especially by some women. The public doesn't stop to realize that when writing to a man who has violated some one law or another that in 99 per cent of the cases he is not a "bum" but has just fallen off a limb and broken some law by the fall, sometimes unintentionally.

To the public who are interested in prison reform work, I would say, "Treat your prison correspondent as you would your brother. If you are a woman remember that your brother is too proud to ask financial aid and would not accept it. You should remember that the man in prison, although he can send money back, cannot make explanations which might hurt the giver's feelings. True friendship and proper regard are not won through bribery. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Sincerely yours,

C.

Where to Buy Books—Books for Prisoners

Members who desire to send new books to prisoners are invited to order them through the LEAGUE rather than elsewhere. The LEAGUE gets the usual dealer's commission in such cases, which goes to the furtherance of its work.

Will members who are doing typewriting for the LEAGUE kindly see that a slip with their name is enclosed with all work returned? Otherwise identification is frequently difficult.

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Letters From Prison Correspondents

"My experience gained by two years' of corresponding with prisoners warrants me in saying that I find them to be gentlemen, appreciative of the smallest favor shown them. At present I am corresponding with four. My impression of them is that they are my truest friends, I would fight for them and I do not believe I am presuming in saying they would do likewise for me. One of my correspondents, now an ex-convict, I am looking forward to meeting in person the coming summer with the greatest interest."

S. W. S.

"My experience has been a most interesting one. The varied types of prisoners furnish one with renewed interest and continually enlarge one's vision of the seething life we find in people. Each prisoner is a volume of tragedy that just requires common sense to meet. I have never met, with the exception of two instances, a higher sense of honor or idealism than I've found in the majority of prisoners. . . . A most beautiful, natural friendship exists between my men and me, no nonsense. We are 'pals,' that is all. When discharged they come to our home. My husband receives them; we entertain them with the same simple courtesy shown everyone. . . . The whole secret of success with them is just to be natural and agreeable. Be on the level with them and they would risk their lives for you. I have never found such loyalty outside of dogs."

S. C.

"The men to whom I write express great confidence in me. One of them believes I have taught him a useful trade, while I experienced a new kind of spiritual joy in the work." P. O.

Every Subscription to the CRITIC helps to send a free copy to a prisoner.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used

for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK .....

for .....

$5.00	50 cts.
$4.00	40 cts.
$3.00	30 cts.
$2.00	25 cts.
$1.00	20 cts.
75 cts.	15 cts.
60 cts.	10 cts.
.....	.....

Name and Address.....

.....

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Special Prison Correspondents Wanted

For Italian and German Prisoners—Those who can write Italian and German.

For Negro Prisoners—Those who do not think that a black skin means a black soul.

For Jewish and Roman Catholic Prisoners—Correspondents of these faiths.

For Prisoners musically inclined—Musical correspondents, especially those familiar with band instruments.

For a Jewish Prisoner who has become a Christian Scientist—One of the same kind.

Some Additions to the Library

Rented, or sold postpaid at prices stated.

Dostoieffsky, Fedor—The House of the Dead, or Prison Life in Siberia, $0.45.
Crime and Punishment (fiction), $0.45.
Carrington, Hereward—True Ghost Stories, $0.75.
Collins, Mabel—As the Flower Grows. $0.85.
Cooper, Irving S.—Theosophy Simplified, cloth, $0.50; paper, sold only, $0.25.
Jinarajadasa, C.—I Promise. $0.60.
Flowers and Gardens, $0.50.
What We shall Teach, $0.50.
How we Remember our Past Lives. $0.60.
Theosophy and Modern Thought, $0.75.
Lindlahr, Dr. H.—Nature Cure, Philosophy and Practice, $2.15.
Nature Cure Cook Book (vegetarian), $2.15.
Nivedita, Sister (Margaret E. Noble)—Religion and Dharma, $0.95.
Underhill, Evelyn—Mysticism, $3.70.
The Mystic Way, $3.70.
Practical Mysticism, $1.10.
Evelyn Underhill is the leading authority on Mysticism.
Vishita, Bhakta—Seership; Hindoo and Oriental Methods, $3.00.

Best Books For Prison Workers

Everybody interested in prison work and problems should read:

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol V. Wednesday, May 17, 1916 No. 20

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE

The old saying "The exception proves the rule" is a profound one, and I commend it to the meditation of certain of our members, who, having struck on the exception, forthwith jump to the conclusion that it is the rule. Short of death, gravitation and the law of the conservation of energy there are few rules which do not have their exceptions. Good judgment consists in the attainment of the sense of mental perspective, in learning to perceive that the fly in front of your nose is really not as big as the house a mile away, even if it does subtend a larger visual angle. That sort of thing is for the child who holds out his hand for the moon. The ability to get the exception and the rule into the right relation in the mind, that is one of the things which distinguishes the real man from the child and the childish man. You have heard, haven't you, something about straining out the gnat and swallowing the camel? Well, that is what is the matter with most of us; we pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and omit the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. And even if we do not merit being called Pharisees and hypocrites for so doing, we are at least very childish, we lack the sense of perspective.

That estimable and astute old gentleman, David, the Psalmist, once remarked, "I said in my haste, all men are liars." And he wasn't indulging in poetic license, either; he really meant it. Two or three men lied to him and he jumped to the conclusion that they were samples of the whole lot. David was wise enough to see his mistake, but many men are not—hence the pessimist, hence too the the attitude which has distinguished the majority of prison administrators up to the present time, the attitude which above all others unfits a man for dealing with his fellows. It is bad enough to be a pessimist, but when one is in a position to act on it, then the results are disastrous.

Under the old system 40 per cent of discharged convicts found their way back to prison. The public, and even the penologists—for ologists, no less than other men, are subject to mental squint—jumped to the conclusion that 40 per cent at least of the prisoners belong to what they call "the criminal class," without the least

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thought as to whether they became backsliders from choice, or because society neglected to make it possible for them to be anything else and still hold soul and body together. Even within the past month or so the New York legislature has passed a highly important law, good on the whole, but which makes the blunder of distinguishing sharply between first offenders and second offenders and which virtually discriminates in favor of the "financier" who has looted a bank once, as against the poor devil who has stolen an overcoat twice. Of course I am not foolish enough to deny that there are those who will always take the shortest cut to getting what they want, irrespective of decency, honor and law. I no more deny it than I deny that there are newspaper editors who are willing to steal a man's reputation in order to get a story which will make their peper sell, or that numerous persons high in the church and society feel justified in selling mining stock on the strength of a picked lump of ore exhibited as a "sample" to suckers, and who excuse themselves to their conscience with the plea that they need automobiles and motor boats—surely no better excuse than that of the recidivist that he requires food and an overcoat in cold weather.

It is futile to draw conclusions from the fact that 40 per cent of discharged convicts backslide, unless you come forward with an analysis of the reasons for their backsliding, nicely tabulated and compared with the motives which prompt the average man. I don't mince matters in the least. Nobody who has studied history and seen the follies of the past will be inclined to believe in the infallibility of the authorities of the present, if he has his wits about him. I have associated too much with learned men to be a victim of the delusion that the robe of the professor or the judge is of divine origin. We have cast overboard the notion of the divine right of kings only to become a prey to superstitious reverence for authority of another kind—the doctor and the professor. The fact that doctors disagree—and they do, all the time—may not justify me in forming my own opinion about the merits of a new explosive or germicide, or the interpretation of a law, but when it comes down to a question of human nature, a large fragment of which I have within my own skin and which I overhaul every day, then, I think. I can draw some conclusions from what I see.

What do I see? Well, here is one thing. A few years ago Sing Sing was the standing evidence that the convict is a moral monster. Few thought of asking whether the fault lay with the system. On the contrary, the bedlam which existed there was taken as irrefutable proof that the convict is a scoundrel and a desperado, while those few who thought differently were called theorists and sentimentalists.

A woman, a dog and a walnut tree—
The more you beat 'em, the better they be.

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—that was the rule on which it was attempted to run Sing Sing—and if the men did not get better, why, that was a case of the exception proving the rule—any sensible prisoner should get better, so lay it on harder.

And yet, there came one Osborne, not an ologist of any kind, not even a man of experience in handling convicts and who, until his famous visit to Auburn prison as Tom Brown, had hardly seen the inside of a penal institution, a man who snapped his fingers at precedent, who was convinced that the rule of doing to others as you would be done by was more than sentimentalism and that prisoners are bad more because of the system than in spite of it. What a change! Probably there is today hardly a community of 1,600 men anywhere outside of walls which conducts itself better. "Of course," you say, "they are under discipline; they have their rules which must be obeyed." Quite true, but so they had five years ago; so do other prisons and so, in fact, does society at large, with its police and its courts. Human nature changes very slowly. It is highly improbable that the type of men in Sing Sing today differs in any essential from that which was there five or ten years ago. New York City and State do not differ markedly from other states and cities. The difference between the Sing Sing of today and the Sing Sing of anti-Osborne times is in no way in the men themselves; it is in this, that something which was already dormant in them has been awakened, and this has been brought about by their knowing that somebody believes in the good which is within them, no matter how badly rusted, and by far the greater portion of them respond. It is only the exception who does not.

I am constantly berated by those who tell me I have gone wild on the subject of prisoners—why don't I write any more of those nice articles on Theosophy or what not? My dear Sir—or Madame—I am not interested in the prisoner only because he is a prisoner and because he cannot move beyond the four walls of his prison. That is bad enough, but there are other things just as bad as being in the penitentiary. I am interested in you, also a prisoner within the walls of your prejudices. I am interested that you shall have a chance to study human nature, to prove for yourself that these men who you regard as outcasts are of like passions with yourself, that they respond to openheartedness as you do and that they, like yourself, are embittered by unkindness and suspicion. This prison problem appeals to me not only as a matter of justice to the convict, not only as a matter of economy for the state. It appeals to me as one of the finest chances ever offered to cultivate in yourself that broad sympathy, that universal tolerance, which is the characteristic of Christianity as taught and exemplified by its founder.

And if it should happen that some man in whom you have placed confidence should betray that confidence, should raise your anticipations and then make a mess of it, for heaven's sake don't

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follow David's example in your haste, but think of what has been done at Sing Sing. "Keep a Goin.'" Get your sense of proportion into order by keeping on. You yourself have had to learn through mistakes; don't get mad at others who have to do the same and who don't learn as quickly. But if you really must get out of patience about it; don't let it reflect on others; don't judge all by the one who went bad—you wouldn't do that even with a basket of eggs.

Appreciations

The Editor wishes to express his appreciation of the many kind letters received both from prisoners and others and to state that if it were possible each would receive a prompt personal acknowledgment. Unfortunately the necessity of limiting our force of stenographers by the cash available makes it difficult to answer even the most urgent letters promptly, and he hopes that the impossibility of transferring his thoughts to paper will not give offense or cause any to think themselves slighted.

The Editor also wishes to express special thanks to those members out of town who are rendering invaluable assistance in the way of letter writing. Nothing has touched him so much as the fidelity and promptness of those who are engaged on what must of necessity be monotonous routine work.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox Says:

"This little charity of Dr. Stokes is very touching, and is one more illustration of how many good people are doing kind acts in this world of whom the general public rarely hears. Let a man do evil, and his name, address, his past life and every possible fact connected with him are sent broadcast over the whole world.

"Let him pursue a path of quiet, unselfish kindness, devoting time, thought, energy and money to the helping of his fellow men, and it is difficult to get his name in print."—*New York Journal.*

Clerical Help Wanted

The LEAGUE desires to secure the voluntary aid of a few of its members who are expert typists, or who are exceptionally good letter writers, who will offer to relieve the congestion in this office by writing form letters, answering letters on their own initiative, etc. This is exclusively in connection with prison work. It is not intended to ask an amount of work which will interfere with other duties, but only such are desired as can be counted on to do what they undertake systematically and promptly. Those living within a day's mailing distance of Washington are preferred, but there is work for others. Where the nature of the work demands it we will supply letterheads and other stationery, and if desired, pay postage for mailing.

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Time Reduction vs. Wage Compensation

Reduction of the term of sentence for good behavior is a very common provision. In several states the law works automatically, the prisoner getting his reduction as a matter of course, according to a fixed schedule, unless he has bad marks for misbehavior. New York State has had such a system for some time. The New York Legislature has now passed a bill—the Sage bill—which allows a further very considerable time reduction to those who work faithfully. The provisions are rather complicated, but it may be said in a general way that first termers will get a reduction of one-fourth, while second and other termers will get one-twelfth.

The original idea of this measure seems to be the compensation of prisoners for their labor. Instead of being paid wages, they are rewarded by a reducton of time. From the standpoint of the prisoner there can be no question that the new law will be hailed with joy. The first object of the man in prison is to get his freedom, and any concession whatever is welcomed. It holds out an inducement for faithful work and efficiency, and incidentally will tend temporarily to relieve the overcrowded condition of the prisons.

So far, so good. It has, however, the serious defect of drawing a hard and fast line between first offenders and those who have been in prison before, without the least regard for the nature of the offense or the conditions under which it was committed. It discriminates in favor of him who has been guilty for the first time of a serious offense, and against him who, under stress of poverty, has been forced to slip up more than once. If the court could be depended on to dispense absolute justice in imposing sentence, doubtless this would matter little, but this is unfortunately not the case.

Time compensation is not and cannot be a substitute for the payment of rational wages to inmates. It is a poor substitute to keep a man in prison for nine years instead of twelve and then to discharge him penniless; it is a poor compensation for him to know that his family will have only nine years instead of twelve to starve. If it is wrong for the state to confiscate the labor of the prisoner for twelve years, it is certainly three-fourths as bad to do it for nine years. As a solution of the problem of the competition of prison labor with free labor, it can cut no figure whatever worth speaking of, as the diminution of the number of prisoners is likely to be counterbalanced by the stimulation of the output. But then, one cannot expect all good things at once.

A Modern Instance. "Two Years' Experience as a Prisoner in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, the Model Prison of the World, by *George B. Wright*, who is now confined in this Institution and Innocent of the Crime charged." Price 50 cents; sold by the LEAGUE for the benefit of the author.

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Sweet Pickles

Has that lady who writes to the Editor that "molasses catches more flies than vinegar" forgotten her pickle age?

That gentleman who addressed the Editor as "Paprika-Tabasco-Stokes" sweetened the pungency of his remark by saying that he could not miss the CRITIC, and by enclosing subscriptions for himself and several friends. We shall gladly accept any amount of such salad, if served with the same dressing.

Alone, alone, all all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

—that represents the attitude of many of the prisoners from whom we hear. It also represents our own attitude when the printer presents his bill and says "No cash, no CRITIC."

The Editor knows that those members who have received prisoners' letters from this office, accompanied with the request to return them for our files, and who have not done so, have simply overlooked the matter. He feels confident that the moment they read this paragraph they will remember that we often have to provide additional correspondents for inmates and that these letters, which they retain, are generally the only source of information which we have and should therefore be available.

We feel quite sure that those members who offer to write to prisoners and then do not do it after receiving their names are not neglecting this intentionally. On the contrary, like ourselves, they are very busy and simply can't remember to do everything. At the same time we suggest that a post card to us, telling us that they have entirely forgotten their offer, will enable us to make some other provision for the man who watches each mail for the letter that never comes.

New members who offer to correspond with prisoners are not required to give personal information, but it really helps us very much. Imagine the consternation of the prisoner who wants a motherly woman for correspondent, when he gets a letter from a lady of twenty, or, when he wants help in studying gas engines, to discover that his correspondent is a specialist in tango.

Universal Correspondence Club

Persons who realize the benefits derived from the opportunity to express themselves through the medium of letter-writing will do well to join the *Universal Correspondence Club.* Address the Secretary, *Charles Albert Seifert, Harrisburg, Pa.,* with 25 cents for three months' membership, or a trial membership for 12 cents in stamps.

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Experience Of A Correspondent

I am more than glad to give my experience. In the first place, my two correspondents have shown a delicate courtesy that is not over-common anywhere. They have never asked what my work was, what my name was—I used my initials at first. When I visited my friend at Sing Sing no host could have made a guest more welcome or treated him with greater consideration. As for trying to "work" me, my friends have both refused to accept anything from me. And as for gratitude—I've never in all my life done anything that deserved such gratitude as I have received, for what—for writing letters. I feel that I have gained quite as much as my friends think I have given. For one thing, I have learned how a man can keep himself self-respecting under the hardest circumstances. Both of my friends "arrive" in a few months. I shall then take other correspondents—but lose these? Not for a minute! M. B. C.

Note. Prisoners and outside correspondents are invited to give their experience. No names will be published.

All Kinds of Books

It is a mistake to suppose that we supply only the books on our lists. These are lists of books which we *lend* as well as sell. We are glad to fill orders for any books which are in print and try to secures copies of books which are out of print.

Prison Papers. We shall be glad to send samples of prison newspapers for a couple of stamps to cover postage.

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Second-hand theosophical, occult and new thought books sold, bought, or taken in exchange or for credit by arrangement.

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How to Train Parents and Children, paper, $0.25.
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Wattles, Wallace D.—The Science of Being Great, $1.08.
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Through Silence to Realization, $1.08.
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Wood, Henry—God's Image in Man, $1.00.
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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V. Wednesday, May 31, 1916 No. 21

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

BLUE RIBBON POODLES

And so I live, you see,
Go through the world, try, prove, reject,
Prefer, still struggling to effect
My warfare; happy that I can
Be crossed and thwarted as a man,
Not left in God's contempt apart,
With ghastly smooth life, dead at heart,
Tame in earth's paddock as her prize.
—Robert Browning; Easter-Day

There is a principle as unalterable as the law of the Medes and Persians, and more so, for it appears to be as eternal and as universal as the law of gravitation. We in the West express this law by the statement that "as a man soweth, so shall he also reap." In the Orient, sages have used the word "Karma" to designate this law. Karma is a Sanskrit word meaning originally "action." It is a most convenient word; few words of equal length sum up so much of philosophy. Volumes have been written and lives spent in working out its significance in the most minute detail. In the West, thanks to students of the oriental and especially to the Theosophists, this word Karma is slowly taking root and doubtless sooner or later the churches and the professors of ethics will adopt it. As Sanskrit was a highly respectable tongue, in fact the mother tongue of all our western languages, I shall permit myself to use this word as meaning that one must bear the results of his own actions, but without in the least committing myself to the opinions of others who may likewise use it, or to any of the frills, foibles and follies which may have been hitched on to it.

The law of Karma is a highly inconvenient law for those who desire to have their own way and escape consequences. If it does not hit you from without and make an example of you before other people, it strikes you from within, which is just as bad. The law of gravitation is also an unpleasant fact when you want to get to the top of a mountain or a New York skyscraper. Just as we have invented elevators to do away with the necessity of climbing up, so too we have invented a plan by which we can escape—or think we

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can—the disastrous results of our sins. We do not undo the Gordian knot into which we have tied the string of our life; we just go on tying it more and more, in the belief that the Great Alexander will come with his sword and loosen it by a single slash. Buddhism and its kindred faiths, it is true, teach a way of escape from Karma, from the effects of your evil deeds, just as does the church, but with this difference. The oriental view is that the attainment of "salvation," or nirvana, is to be effected only by your own efforts. You are at the foot of the ladder—if you want to get to the top you must climb up. If you fall off you must climb again. The church—and mind you I am not saying the gospel of Jesus—teaches that no amount of climbing can profit you anything; you have to submit to being hoisted. You must want to get to the top, to be sure, but your own efforts will be futile. By an act of faith you suddenly find yourself on the roof, whereas, without that act, you can keep on climbing forever without getting anywhere, like the horses in an old-fashioned farm treadmill. I suppose you have been present at a revival meeting and have seen some miserable fellow jump to his feet and declare that he is saved. Had he died five minutes ago he would have passed his endless future in torment—if he dies five minutes hence he will join the hosts of the blessed.

The wise men of the East were far too wise to accept such a view. True, it has been taught that in some far distant age one would be relieved from having to reap what he sows, but for practical purposes, in the world as it is, it does not go. If you commit an evil deed it will surely find you out sooner or later; you can escape only in one way, by bearing the consequences and living it down. No act of faith can save you except to this extent, that it enables you to see your path more clearly. The celebrated story of the dying thief on the cross, far from illustrating the doctrine of salvation by faith, is a striking illustration of the working of Karma—the man was crucified for his offense, he paid the penalty and was free.

Rarely has there been a great truth which has not been spoiled by its adherents in the effort to elaborate it. Just as the simple conception that if you would escape from your sins you must have an ideal has been elaborated into the view that mere belief in that ideal will save you, will release you from the necessity of paying your debt—and by that I mean the current view that your past can be wiped out in some other way than by your own acts—so those who emphasize the doctrine of Karma elaborate it without end, and when they get into some hole evolve a new notion to get out. There are those who hold that great physical disasters, floods, earthquakes, shipwrecks, are directly the result of human folly and sin. God is said to have destroyed the human race in the great deluge because of its sins, and to have spared Noah and his more or less virtuous relatives. But that doesn't hold here. Nobody can deny

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that many apparently virtuous and innocent people are constantly killed by accident—there seems to be absolutely no discrimination against sinners. What is the reply? Why, just this. If they are not bad today they must have been wicked sometime; they are paying up for their past deeds. How about the people who went down with the Lusitania? Why, they were all bad at one time; the force of Karmic law gathered them all together on one ship and directed the German torpedo which drowned them as a punishment for their sins. Now, they have paid their karmic debts and can start afresh somewhere; their ledgers are balanced. You may be perfectly sure that if a brick falls off a chimney and cracks your head it is because you have cracked some fellow's head in a previous life, or done something equally bad. It has been seriously offered as an explanation of the sufferings of the Belgian nation that it is being made to pay up for the treatment it has given the natives in the Congo, while one devout believer in Karma has stated that those German soldiers who are said to have committed atrocities in Belgium are reincarnated Congo negroes who are taking this means of getting back at their former oppressors! It may be a relief to you to know, as you sit in your prison cell, that you are paying off bad Karma, but the saintly John Bunyan did the same—he, too, was discharging his debt. There are even those who insist that Jesus, by his crucifixion, was paying off the final instalment of his karmic debt, was suffering the last time for his past sins.

One does not have to accept all of these vagaries to admit that "as a man soweth, so shall he also reap." The parallel between the physical and the spiritual is a very close one. If you ruin your body by abuse, no act of faith will make you whole; you have to retrace your steps slowly and painfully; it matters nothing if the abuse has been through ignorance. The law of physical Karma is a perfect one. So also with the spiritual law. If you corrupt your soul, or if it is corrupted through no fault of your own, no act of faith can remove the boils and ulcers. You have to lead a healthy life till you are self-purged; you have to bear whatever suffering comes to you as a result of the past till you have paid off your debt. The Great Physician gives you an ideal, a lamp to light you, but you yourself must do the work—that is the doctrine of Karma in its simple form, and it is common sense. And besides, it is the honorable and manly view. I would be ashamed to accept gratuities. If I have made a debt I will pay it. I would be ashamed to have some other man die for my shortcomings while I accept a receipt in full. It would be but poor respect to the memory of the Great Man who is my ideal, who willingly suffered death as the outcome of his acts when he might easily have escaped, if I should disregard his example and call for a remission of my sins, if I should try to get out scot-free under the cloak of another's agony—no, that is not the way either men or angels are grown.

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True devotion lies in imitating, not in sponging.

But even those who accept the law of Karma with supplements and appendices assume that it is not fully automatic. They postulate Lords of Karma—great beings or archangels, who pull here and push there and see that the machinery of the Great Law does not jam. Even the most devout believer in Karma assumes that there is a divinity which shapes our ends. When it demands that you suffer for your sins, it puts you aboard a train and smashes the life out of you, or sends you to live in the slums, or marries you to a shrew. If you have been good in a past life, it gives you peace and ease in this. Most of us believe in Providence; we think that the High Gods favor us at times, that they give us a boost on occasion. I am far from denying it, but we are very poor judges of what is really good for us, and equally so of what is bad for us. "Sweet are the uses of adversity," and bitter, too, are often the uses of prosperity, do we not see the dangers to which it exposes us? And now, let us come to the text from Browning which I have quoted, and which everyone should take to heart.

The law of Karma is sometimes called the Good Law, and rightly, for this reason. You have to pay your debt, you have to make up for your faults and sins to the utmost jot and tittle, but paying your debt does not leave you precisely where you were before you incurred it. In incurring a debt and paying it, in suffering and working your way out, you have scored a distinct advance; you have gained strength and experience, you have learned a lesson. The real folly and blunder in life is not in making the mistake, but in not learning not to do it again. To learn this, that is the true repentance. I have done many foolish and mean things in my life; I have been up against it time and again when it seemed impossible to go on. I positively do not repent of one of them. Each has taught me a lesson and I have come through stronger and wiser. It is written in the Bhagavad Gita that you must work, not for the sake of the result, but for the work's sake. Victory and defeat are nothing. It is a hard idea to grasp, but it is the true philosophy. It is a universal law that only through action can you progress. You doubtless know those who have all that heart can desire; what are they? Nothing but blue ribbon poodles, unless they still forge ahead. You know that there are those who are miserable because they do not get what they work for, but have you not seen those equally miserable who do? To be eternally satisfied is to be in the position of the tapeworm, and degeneracy follows close on their heels. You know well enough that health of body can be maintained only by exercise. Have enough to keep you from hustling and your liver gets out of order, your stomach begins to misbehave and your kidneys follow suit. Gout is a rich man's disease. The exact parallel holds in the mental and spiritual world. To maintain spiritual health you must hustle continually and be up against obsta-

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cles. The moment you are in a position to rest, that moment you are in danger. This universal law is the true Providence; it is the true beneficence.

The trials and difficulties you encounter are not of necessity the result of past errors—they may be, but you need not bother about that. They are as likely to have a relation to the future rather than the past. They should act on you just *as if* they were given to you for your benefit, just as a hard task is given to a bright pupil. Stop worrying about your Karma, and take this view if you really want peace.

What is peace? There is a spurious sort of peace. You want to get away from it all and land in heaven, where you can sit around with nothing to do but stare at your neighbors, like the men in the idle house at the Ohio Penitentiary; you want to be a celestial mollycoddle. You could not possibly be anything else when you get the chance, if ease is your ideal. The real peace is that which comes to you when, in the midst of your struggles and sufferings, you perceive the divine purpose in it all. Do you suppose that the Great Being who runs the Universe sits around in ease, sipping nectar like a god on Olympus? Not so. The state of that Being is one of tremendous activity, an activity which is manifest in even the atoms of the smallest part of your body. If you are aiming godward, and that I take it, is the object of all this groaning of the world, you will see that peace is in activity, in pushing forward, and in knowing just why you are being prodded. Inertia is the reverse of godlike, and that spurious peace which consists in comfort is but the narcotic which benumbs you. Your real danger is when you have just what you want.

Registered League Membership Number, May 24th—3,820.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used

for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK .....

for .....

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An Apology To New Members, and To Old Ones

The Editor feels sure that members will pardon us when they do not receive the names of prisoners as soon as expected. It is not that we are careless or that we do not have the prisoners who are waiting. The reason is this. Owing to the syndicated article of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, which has appeared in several newspapers, there has been a large influx of new members. Our clerical force is not sufficient to handle this work promptly and our funds do not admit of securing more help. Owing to the unwillingness, or inability, or both, of the majority of members to contribute to the financial support of the LEAGUE, much time has to be spent in gunning around after cash to keep things going—time which might be better employed, and could be, did each member realize that a little assistance in his or her part is needed. Careful records have to be kept and letters of explanation and introduction written. This may seem to some unnecessary—why not hand out the names and be done with it? We can assure them that experience has proved that it gives much greater satisfaction to everybody in the long run. It is system, not red tape. Nobody would be satisfied if his name and that of his correspondent were not on file and if it were therefore impossible to answer questions.

The Editor therefore begs for patience, as under no circumstances will anyone be overlooked.

Letter From A Prisoner

Dear Sir:— May 7, 1916

I trust you will pardon me for bringing myself to your attention. However, I feel confident that you will Overlook my apparent presumption. I am an unfortunate inmate of ———— prison, Serving a natural life sentence for burglary.

I have been in hear going on eleven years now near all my friends is deid since I came here so I would like to write to some one. once in a while. I heard of the O. E. League, I would be verry Thankful if one of its members would care to Correspond with me.

Trusting you will forward my name to some member,

I remain Respy, your B.

Members are earnestly requested to observe strictly such prison rules as are mentioned when names are sent to them. Certain members have seriously compromised our work by neglecting to observe the prison rules, and by entering into discussions with the officials regarding them. It is the duty of the officials to see that forbidden subjects are not discussed or prohibited articles delivered. To argue with them is not only useless and an invitation to them to disregard rules which the law requires them to enforce, but it creates bad feeling and might, if persisted in, lead to the total exclusion of the LEAGUE. Cut it out.

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Sweet Pickles

Some members wonder why we send the names of two prisoners when only one is asked for. On the same principle that you buy two eggs when you want only one—one may be addled. For the same reason we like to give a prisoner two correspondents.

Will the lady who berates us for asking 35 cents for membership in the LEAGUE, and who says she has never been asked a cent for the privilege of doing church work, kindly tell us the name of the church in which she works? We have yet to learn of the church in which the parson functions for nothing and in which there are no collections or pew rents, and which is on the free list of the gas and electric light companies, the printer or the coal dealer. Oh, yes, we have, too. We understand that participation in the religious services of prison chapels is entirely free to inmates. Possibly that is the sort of church the lady has attended.

Prisoners are not required to state their specialties, past or present, and in fact such information might be embarrassing at times, but a request for a correspondent should state the prisoner's age and length of term yet to be served. Some correspondents prefer young men, others old ones; some prefer men soon to be paroled, others life termers.

Will members who are doing typewriting for us kindly see that their name is enclosed with everything returned? Otherwise we have no means of identifying it.

The Square Deal. Our friend "Tex," editor of *The Square Deal,* the weekly paper of the Kansas State Penitentiary, is a much bigger man than his name. Get his views of the prison problem by sending 50 cts. for a year's subscription to the paper, at Lansing, Kansas.

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address ***O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.***

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Books for Prisoners

We call the attention of members to the fact that many prisons admit books sent to prisoners only when shipped direct from a publisher or dealer. Those who order books sent in this way will help our work by ordering them through us, as our library label admits them. The price is the same as elsewhere, and the dealer's profit goes to supporting our prison work.

Don't forget this when buying books for prisoners.

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BY

The O. E. Library League

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

A CORNER OF THE PREPAREDNESS PROBLEM

For the time being, the old admonition "Prepare to meet thy God" has given way to the cry "Prepare to lick thy enemy." We have forgotten Satan, and are thinking of a more material enemy who will strike us from the East, the West or the South. But while I am in hearty sympathy with those who advocate universal and compulsory military training and a large navy, and while I fail to see the least reason in the attitude of those who would oppose an enemy which attacks us with teeth and ptomaines, while disregarding the foe who wears pants and carries a rifle, it is entirely apart from my intention to add my small war whoop to the thunders of the press and T. R. Whatever merits the question of military and naval preparedness may have, and whatever objections may be raised by patriots of the Bryan-Ford variety, one of the big things this war has done for us has been to agitate the subject of general national efficiency. The "mobilization of industries" is a burning question; it is one of system and efficiency. Just as every citizen should be prepared to defend his home, so every industry should be ready to contribute its quota in time of need. While efficiency is not necessarily preparedness, preparedness assumes efficiency in every direction.

The corner of the preparedness problem which I have in mind is a pretty big one, and the reason it is so little considered in our discussions, is that like the air it is so universal that we are unconscious of its existence. A statistician has stated that crime costs the United States six billion dollars a year, or three times the cost of the National Government and an average of sixty dollars for each man, woman and child. I am not able to vouch for these figures, but when one considers that they include the costs of police, courts, criminal lawyers, losses by theft and protection against it, we have a pretty big proposition on hand in the question of efficiency. Suppose you had to pay three times the sum of your household expenses for buying bolts, bars and burglar alarms, wouldn't you kick? Wouldn't you prick up your long ears and listen for some way to turn a fraction of that amount over to your school bills and your savings account? Suppose that your crime tax bill,

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instead of being spread out thin over the cost of your rent, your clothes, your bread and butter and your cigars, or put in the form of a tax bill for general expenses, should take this form—"John Smith, with family of five, assessment for suppressing crime and supporting criminals, $300," wouldn't you really begin to get interested and wonder if you couldn't have that $300 for your own use and enjoyment? We cannot control what the Germans, the Japs or the British may try to do to us, but we do have a measure of control over what goes on within our own boundaries.

We all know the arguments of the temperance lecturer, showing how many schools and churches could be built and manned if men would only not drink, and while we sometimes pooh-pooh them, it is the most sensible talk imaginable. We are unable to get the things we want and need because we insist on having the things we want and don't need. In the present instance it is still worse; we go without what we need because we insist on having the thing we neither want nor need—that is to say, crime, the biggest and foolishest luxury which we sport. Of course I am not saying that we can by any possibility become a nation of saints, that we can all be changed in the twinkling of an eye. But remember that a very large fraction of the cost of this war is being paid by people economizing on things they don't need and are better off without. The Englishman walks where he used to ride, he drinks water instead of wine, and saves his shillings and his health, which he puts into national defense. Russia has done away with vodka, and the Russian, while he is occupied in killing and getting killed, is at least not pickling his liver and beating his wife. On the whole, I regard his present occupation as preferable. It is a horrible thing to have to go out and shoot people, but it is not one bit worse than making a sick beast of oneself by drink. It is foolish to talk of doing away with crime entirely. It can't be done in this age and with men with passions and desires such as we have. But suppose we could do away with *one-tenth* of it by common sense methods—and that is hardly visionary. Then, if our statistician is right, we should save six hundred millions a year—the cost of thirty battle cruisers at twenty millions each, if you choose. This year Congress is asked to appropriate for five battle cruisers at twenty millions each. Cutting down our crime bill by a little over one and a half per cent would pay for them. Congress haggles over a ship more or less, while it cannot be induced to devote an hour to passing penal legislation already before it, which, if generally adopted, would pay the cost of the extra ship before it is off the stocks.

It is stated that the standing prison population of this country is 150,000. Admitting that many of these are defectives, that they are weak in mind and body and not to be counted on in any way, still, that is not true of most of them. The majority are able to work in the shops, the mines, on the roads, or in whatever other way

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the state chooses to employ them. Given a healthy outdoor life, like that of the sailor, and the splendid discipline under which the men are kept, and a majority of them would do creditable service. There is no use in denying that of these 150,000 prison inmates most are getting more or less what they deserve. They have led an undisciplined life and are paying up for it—at our expense largely and largely through our fault. But certainly twenty per cent of them, that is, 30,000, are not as bad as we assume. They are victims of circumstances; they have made mistakes through ignorance, through lack of opportunity, because we have insisted on licensing men to sell poison to them, because under our rotten judicial system they have been refused another chance, or have been unable to afford to defend themselves against the police and the public prosecutors whose interest it is to make a good record. They are there because we saintly people who have not yet served our terms in prison refuse to employ them when they are let out, and so force them to steal again in order to live. They are there because after putting them there we do everything possible to keep them, because we neglect to teach them how to shift for themselves, because our parole boards judge them by unreasonable and arbitrary standards, because we have a Department of Justice which acts on the principle of condemning instead of rescuing, because our judges hand out a twenty-year sentence as lightly as they would hand a cigar to a friend, without the least conception of what it means to be imprisoned, because our legislatures still cling to the notion of revenge instead of reform. They are there for many other reason due to our own stupidity and ignorance of human nature.

Just suppose that twenty per cent of the present prison population could be kept out of prison by improvement of earlier conditions, or even by a few simple reforms, such as a probation system, the public defender, a better parole system and other reforms already in use to a limited extent and not utopian in their nature. Just suppose that with a little common sense, devoted to removing the causes of crime, we cut our national crime bill down ten per cent we should save enough to build thirty battle cruisers a year, and have enough men to man them at the rate of a thousand men to the ship.

These figures are crude. But what I want to emphasize is that when we talk about the terrible cost of building a navy and the difficulty of finding men to man it, we might cast about to see whether we do not have a few needless and harmful luxuries in the way of a defective judicial and penal system which might be made to bear the cost, to the great advantage of all concerned. This war has shown, as never before, that victory is not won in the field alone. Its roots penetrate far down into the social life, the habits and laws of the people. Every needless waste, everything which ties up the man who might be making good, means a disadvantage in the hour of trial.

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"But you wouldn't have an army and navy composed of criminals, would you?" Well, no, not exactly. But suppose you scratch your head and see if you are not confusing two very different words. Not all criminals are convicts, and equally not all convicts are criminals. Certainly we do not wish men in the army and navy whose characters are so weak, whose moral nature is of such a low order that they cannot be depended on. But if a prison inmate is fit to be paroled he certainly should be fit—supposing he is an able-bodied man—to meet the qualifications demanded of a naval or military recruit. If he is fit to be sent out into the world on his own responsibility he should be fit to serve under the strict discipline of the army and navy. What to do to give discharged prisoners a start is one of the big problems. What could be better than to open the military career to them? There is a growing sentiment that when the prison gates close behind him the man has paid his debt and should be free in fact as well as in theory. I think that the question of a military or naval career tor discharged convicts is one which should be seriously considered, and for several reasons, among them because it affords a rigid discipline which would be the best possible transition from the prison discipline to ordinary life. I would advocate systematic military training in prisons with this object in view. A noted prison administrator has said that it is unjust to discriminate against the second offender as against the first offender, because the second offender has had more chance to learn the futility of breaking the law—he is in a higher grade in the school of experience. If that is so, it is equally unjust to discriminate against the first offender as against him who has not yet slipped up.

When we get our brains to working rightly on this criminal problem we will see that not only are the majority of men who go to prison in need of just that discipline which military training and service afford, but that a large part of them would give creditable service. Nothing has been so instructive as the career of the Sing Sing Mutual Welfare League. It can hardly be longer questioned—always assuming physical fitness—that the members of that League would show as good an average as any group of outsiders taken at random, if offering themselves before the recruiting officer. When I was a young fellow and went for the first time to register as a voter, the third question I was asked was "Have you ever been in prison?" I might have been a bum of the worst sort, I might have been loaded to the gullet with liquor, my vote might be for sale to the highest bidder, I might be a seducer, a liar, a swindler to the *n*th degree within the law, and I was judged competent to take a share in the government of the nation—but if I had been in prison, quite irrespective of *why,* then my opinion was not wanted, my right as a citizen was forfeited. Could anything be more absurd? If I have made one debt and paid it, then I am marked off the list of

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voters. If I have made a hundred debts which I have not paid, then I am accepted. It is time we were getting over such foolish notions.

The corner of the preparedness problem which I have in mind, then, is the reduction of the crime bill of the nation, partly by such reforms as tend to prevent crime, beginning at the cradle and the hearth, partly by the utilization of the classes which we now send to prison and either keep there or discharge in worse condition than when they entered. The first is the larger and more difficult problem, because it involves the whole question of poverty, of labor, of education, of public health. It is more difficult because it involves our own personal obedience to the inner law quite as much as passing laws to make the other fellow behave, because it assumes an epidemic of personal morality in addition to an epidemic of legislation. It may be boiled down to just this—our own ignorance, indifference and selfishness. Just as long as we insist on our own amusements and luxuries regardless of the man underneath, just as long as we are indifferent to the sufferings of others, just as long as we regard the world as a place to get all we can for ourselves, just so long shall we have to pay the bill not only to the grocer, the wine merchant, the ladies' tailor and what not, but also to the police, the court, the prison; just so long we shall have to pay not only for what we want, but for what we would avoid if we could; just so long are we twice taxed. The second consideration, the treatment of the offender, being more purely a question of legislation, is simpler, but as it has been so often discussed in these pages, it may be left for other occasions.

Registered LEAGUE membership number, June 8th, 4,028.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

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The Cellular System

W. Douglas Morrison, in his valuable book on *Juvenile Offenders,* points out that the plan of locking convicts in separate cells did not originate in the desire to punish them, but to keep them apart so that the worst offenders should not contaminate the others. The idea seems to have been drawn from the custom of locking recalcitrant monks and nuns in their cells, and is therefore of monastic origin. As a form of treatment of delinquents it appears to have been first used in Florence in 1667 for delinquent juveniles, but without any idea of punishment. Benjamin Franklin introduced it into Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Quakers established solitary confinement both by night and day, without work of any kind, while New York adopted isolation at night with silence by day.

Readers of Dostoieffsky's *Prison Life in Siberia* will remember that in the prison where he served a term there was no such thing as a cell and that apart from flogging as a punishment for misbehavior the lot of the Russian prisoner seems to have been easier than that of his American brother. In fact, no one comparing life in San Quentin as portrayed by Donald Lowrie in *My Life in Prison* with Dostoieffsky's narrative could fail to prefer the Siberian prison as a place of residence. Only in Manchuria, where convicts are said to be kept in loose fitting boxes placed horizontally and stacked in piles, is anything to be found worse than in the Sing Sing of five years ago, or in that of today, as for that matter, as far as lodging is concerned.

Notices To Prisoners

If you have already sent in your application, don't write again and ask to be enrolled. If you get a copy of the CRITIC addressed to you it is evidence that your name has been entered on our list. We don't mind being hurried up and a further letter is welcomed, but it should state that you have already applied. To duplicate you on our list means needless work and expense.

The distribution of a periodical, even as small as the CRITIC, free to prisoners is unusual, and as you can imagine, a matter of much expense. We have considered discontinuing this on account of the cost. You will help us to continue by assisting us to eliminate the deadwood. If you leave the institution, or if any of your friends leave, who have been getting the CRITIC, notify us and so enable us to eliminate the waste.

You need feel no hesitation in asking for another correspondent, should the one you have prove unsatisfactory. All complaints are treated as confidential.

We have at present more offers from Jewish and Christian Science members to correspond with prisoners than we can satisfy. If you have an inmate friend of either of these faiths who would like a correspondent, get him to write to us.

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Our Goat

Our goat has a word for those who ask questions and get no reply. It is this. With our present office force, which has to be paid from the contributions of members, the goat is able to reply to about one in every four letters received. He does not wish to be considered a careless or uncivil goat, but it is a matter of cash. Stenographers, like everything else this side of Jordan, cost money. As long as the members—with a few exceptions—will not contribute their pro rata share of the expenses of a few cents a month, so that an additional stenographer can be employed, it is unjust to blame the goat, and useless to entertain a grouch. He would gladly reply to everybody, and add a nice compliment at the end without charge. But to enclose a two-cent stamp under the notion that it puts him under an obligation to send a ten-cent reply is a mistake. It takes two cents of his time to read the letter, with nothing left for the stenographer. And this is said in the sweetest spirit imaginable. R. S. V. P.

Notices To Prison Correspondents

If you have asked for a prisoner for correspondent, please have a little patience if you have to wait a few days. As we explained last time, the work in this office is great and the workers few. There has been a sudden growth in membership. Nobody will be overlooked, but it is absolutely necessary, in order to give permanent satisfaction, to make certain records; we cannot hand out names without due consideration of the requirements of the prisoners and the correspondent. Any information about yourself which you care to give in the meantime will help us in making a satisfactory selection.

Members are earnestly requested to report to us when their prisoners have been discharged, or have ceased writing. It is a needless expense to keep them on our list and send them the CRITIC. If you can't help us with a contribution at least aid us in cutting out the deadwood.

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address ***O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.***

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Forrest—Development of Western Civilization, 1.30 (new, 2.20).
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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

Published biweekly at 1207 Q St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V | Wednesday, June 28, 1916 | No. 23

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE TIGER

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb, make thee?

—William Blake; The Tiger

Nobody looks for altruism in a tiger; consequently we do not lose our temper or feel shocked when we do not find it. Tigers look on man-eating as a matter of course and any tiger who should come forward with a plea that it is wrong would be set down as a mawkish sentimentalist, just as those today are treated who protest against brutal physical or mental treatment of convicts. We object to the man-eating propensities of the tiger, but we do not harbor a personal grudge; we do not despise him, call him a criminal or indulge in Pharisaical considerations about our own superiority. We admit that it is his nature and that he is quite right in obeying his natural instincts when he can, at his own risk. I do not think that in our attitude toward the predacious animal world we show anything of the attitude we manifest towards our own fellows who look out for themselves at our expense. We reserve malice, hatred and uncharitableness for our fellow man, and excuse the tiger on the ground that he is not a moral being. We regard him precisely as we regard the inanimate forces of nature, the tempest and the fire. And in adopting this personal attitude towards other men we blind ourselves wholly to the true situation. We not only hate the sin, but we hate the sinner, and as a result inflict all sorts of unnecessary suffering on him who goes wrong. It is an ignoble attitude, and quite as absurd as hating a tiger, a bacillus or a hailstorm.

Crime is maladjustment. Disregarding those who are criminals because they are physically diseased or mentally unbalanced,

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and therefore subjects for medical treatment, the criminal is not vicious and wicked in the sense which we assume. His qualities are those which would be in place in other environments. I think we should not forget our own nature and our past history. Man has always been a predatory animal and it today, just as fully as is the tiger. The tiger has certain rules, quite well fitted to his circumstances. He has the rule that tiger must not eat tiger; he loves and defends his offspring and his mate. Outside of this everything is prey to him. Quite the same with man. He does not hesitate to kill and eat other animals, and even worse, he does not hesitate to kill his fellow man and invoke the blessing of God on his act. There is no beast which fights with his own kind to the extent that man does, unless it be those semi-human beings, the ants, and quite apart from using physical force, there is not an animal which preys on his own intimate fellows as does man. Consider the ant or the bee. There is perfect cooperation in each community; there is no such thing as each one trying to get possession of all he can at the expense of the others. The naturalist has yet to discover the insect which monopolizes a tract of ground, renting it out to his fellows and taking for himself the product of their labor with the exception of a small margin, just enough to keep them alive and make them work for him.

Now, for the sake of carrying on this predacious life the more satisfactorily man has evolved a social system which is a combination of cooperation with competition. This has grown up through the ages and we call it "civilization." It is a pretty poor affair so far, not much better than the primitive state, albeit it is the soil from which a better condition may ultimately spring. It is characterized by self-seeking backed up by great intelligence; it has benefited the average man and woman in this way; it gives them a chance to starve slowly, instead of being killed outright. We all know this, if we do not shut our eyes to it; we all can see, if we will take the trouble, that the vast majority of our fellows find life not one bit easier than the savage. We all know that the boasted achievements of surgery are not for the multitude.

We lay down certain rules; those who conform to them are said to be virtuous; those who adhere to the ancient regime are called criminals. Today we enact a new law. Those who violate it are fined or sent to prison, whereas yesterday they would have passed for respectable citizens. Tomorrow a new phase of society presents itself; those who do not adjust themselves at once drop into the so-called criminal class. Just consider a case or two. It is but a few years past—most can remember it—when anyone was allowed and in fact expected to carry a pistol. Today it is against the law. A few years ago underselling your competitor was universal; anyone could do what he wished with his own. Today rate cutting and special concessions and rebates are forbidden in the transportation business. One does not have to go back very

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far to the time when the child was the absolute property of the parents, and the wife of the husband. How many years ago is it that slavery was legalized in this country? The loose sexual relations which today are discountenanced were the common custom of past ages.

I need not multiply examples. I simply wish to emphasize the fact that a very large proportion of the offenses of today were the commonplaces and even the virtues of our ancestors. The competition of today is expressed under that much worn term, the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. And when I state that a large proportion of the acts which are regarded as criminal today were once actually virtuous, I mean simply this, that evolution has progressed, that man has risen in the past, largely by the use of greater strength, keener wits and a larger degree of what we would today call unscrupulousness or cruelty. Just as it is really a virtue in the tiger to kill and eat for the maintenance of his kind, and as altruism would be wholly out of place, so with man, as he was. The tiger would not serve himself or his race by taking to potatoes and peanuts as a diet. Time was when self was supreme, and was necessarily so in order that the evolution could progress. Rape was a virtue, because the race had to be kept up at all costs; theft was a virtue because it crushed out the weaker and enabled him who was able to steal the most to survive. When the Patriarch put away his sterile wife, he was simply obeying the law of maintaining the breed. It was not in the interest of the race that he should die without offspring.

If you will follow back the vices of today, then, you will find that they are in many cases the virtues of a bygone age, because they were the means by which the fittest survived, and progress was made possible. They have become vices, because other means have been discovered of accomplishing the same results, without the unpleasant consequences entailed on a portion of the community.

There is no reason for supposing that we have reached the climax of evolution. Just as the virtues of the past have become the vices of today, so there can be no question that many of the virtues of today will become the vices of ages to come. The man of the future will look on us just as we look on the savage or on the tiger. If I were to point out to you some of the present virtues which I regard as looming vices, you would set me down for a socialist, an anarchist, a mawkish sentimentalist or an out-and-out crank. But let us get out of ourselves for a moment and attempt to grasp the standpoint of a superior being. We can see why many things now tabooed were once necessary; we can see that at one time progress depended on a rigid application of the law of the survival of the fittest, without regard to the altruistic sentiment. We are far from having solved the riddle of the Universe, but if we assume, as most do, that it is the result of the working

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of a Great Intelligence, is it not rather preposterous to assume that the Being which made the lamb did not with equally good reason make the tiger? And if the animal tiger is provided with instincts, claws and teeth for destruction, is there not some justification for the existence of the various forms of human tiger? "And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good." Volumes have been written and endless words have been wasted on the question why, if God hates sin, does He permit it to exist? The answer is simple enough—God does *not* hate either the sin or the sinner. He no more hates the murderer and the murder than he hates the tiger and the rattlesnake or their bite. We hate them, but not so much because of what they are as because they interfere with us. The other day somebody of benevolent disposition sent me a pamphlet telling me that I would "fry in hell" unless I repented. I will no more fry in hell for the worst thing I could possibly do than I would for having tumbled down time and time again before I knew how to walk. I have to keep falling till I learn how to walk; it is part of the process of learning. All progress is by experiment, by trial and mistake, whether it be the child learning to walk, or the human race on its progress Godward. From the sublime standpoint of the "Master of the Show" all of these things stand on pretty much the same footing. Have you read the story of the temptation of Christ by the devil? Do you remember how he was offered all the kingdoms of the world if he would fall down and worship the evil one? It is a profound story and the moral is, that he who was tempted gained his power by resisting the temptation; it was an ordeal he had to go through with. I am sorry for the devil, but I consider him, or to be more concise, I consider temptation an indispensable factor in progress. In the spiritual world I regard the constant slipping and getting up again as I regard the efforts of the infant. Nobody can teach you to walk; you must learn for yourself. Sinning, like tumbling down, is an inevitable incident. As well kick about gravitation.

Egoism and altruism—selfishness and selflessness, these are the two poles. Life progresses from the pole of self, absolutely needful at first, from a condition where selflessness would mean destruction, through every possible degree of transition, to the ideal of the future, perfect selflessness. Consequently, those traits which were originally necessary, and therefore virtuous, end in becoming vices. On the other hand, traits which in the beginning would have been incompatible with existence, and which were vices, become in the progress of time virtuous. I can see no other explanation of the struggles of the world than that they are the continual tumbling down and getting up again. I can see no other aim or purpose in evolution than that it is a progress from the perfect selfishness of the primitive cell to the perfect altruism of the Divine nature. We in the West have not accepted the conception of reincarnation,

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which is universal in the East. If we could imagine intelligence passing from one form of material life, after a temporary death, through others, through a long succession ever upward, we should solve many a problem which our present views leave a mystery and a contradiction. We should see that those traits which we now despise are indispensable, that every soul must pass through all places, clean and foul alike, must try all things and ultimately hold fast to that which is good. And in place of despising or hating our brother, the criminal, we should give him our hand, instead of throwing obstacles in his way. It is only by doing this that we can prove that we have progressed a step further than he has. When we do this, we shall begin to see the meaning of the words, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

Clinton Prison

We are credibly informed that the Warden of Clinton Prison does not consider the ladies of the O. E. L. L. proper persons for his wards to communicate with, and that all such correspondence has been stopped, irrespective of age, condition or previous services rendered.

This, of course, is a matter beyond our control. As our readers well know, it is our aim to cooperate with, not to antagonize or argue with the authorities. We are sorry for the two hundred men in Clinton Prison whom we have provided with helpful friends and we publish this notice solely with this object, that members who find that their letters from that institution have suddenly stopped will not blame the boys themselves, and that they may apply to us for other correspondents more happily situated.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK .....

for .....

$5.00	50 cts.
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Some Pointed Facts For Members

Some of our members have inquired why we solicit contributions and how they are used. Let us present a few figures, approximate only, because they vary from week to week. These, we think, will convince you that a ten cents registration fee will not go very far. Please consider that the subscription price of the CRITIC just about covers the cost of issuing it to subscribers, that the cost of paper is constantly advancing and that prison members get it free, while many have to be issued for propaganda purposes.

Average Expenditures for One Week

Office rent	$10.00
Clerical service, including stenographers, typists, bookkeeping, filing, records, addressing, charwoman, etc. (the Editor and Manager gets no remuneration)	55.00
Printing and issuing the CRITIC, including postage and envelopes (one-half the bi-weekly cost)	27.00
Letter and miscellaneous postage	24.00
Stationery and office supplies and sundries	6.00
Heat and light (weekly average for the year)	3.00
	$125.00

The actual receipts in the form of members' registration fees and CRITIC subscriptions from members and others average about $12 a week, leaving a balance of about $113 a week which has to be met from other sources. A portion of this is covered by profits from selling and renting books, but these are meagre and in summer trivial.

The net result is that it requires a pro rata of about 30 cents a month—a cent a day—in the form of a contribution from each member, exclusive of prisoners, to meet the demands of the work economically and yet systematically conducted. As a matter of fact, relatively very few members contribute this small pro rata amount or even anything, and the net amount of the contributions is largely diminished by the necessity of constant reminders, to say nothing of time spent in soliciting.

Carrying on a work of this kind is not the simple matter many imagine. We have to keep in touch with prisoners through the CRITIC; we have to seek new members; letters must be answered and filed for reference and a careful record of everything kept: new members have to be put to work and guided. Were it not for the generosity of a few members we could not continue at all, and we constantly face the alternatives of raising the subscription price of the CRITIC, of dropping the prisoners from our mailing list, or both, or of dying a slow death for lack of an effective propaganda. As it is, we are much hampered.

A cent a day saved by each member would make 30 cents at the end of the month. It would hardly be missed if one made up his

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mind to it, and it would be of incalculable help to thousands of prisoners. A cigar, a car fare, a soda, a movie, a Sunday paper or many another trifle which gives but a moment's gratification, if dispensed with occasionally, would do it. It would help us to get a new member, to start another prisoner on the right road.

Will you not fill out the coupon to be found herewith, making your contribution as generous as you can, with a margin for what you can do more when you have acquired the habit, and so help to make up for those members less fortunate than yourself?

Our Goat

Our Goat presents his respects to certain members who have vigorously resented being approached more than once on the subject of a little contribution and who have even insisted on severing their connection with us. In most of the churches which we know, the collection plate is passed every Sunday, and we have yet to observe any worshipper sass the usher or tear out of the meeting in a huff. That is a reception reserved for our humble plate-bearer, Our Goat.

Some Cheap Books

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Tanner—The Child, .80 (new, 1.35).
Taylor—Agricultural Economics, .80 (new, 1.35).
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Introduction to the Science of Peace, .25 (new, .40).
Path to the Masters of Wisdom, .25 (new, .40).

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. V | Wednesday, July 12, 1916 | No. 24

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM AND PRISON REFORM

In the platform adopted by the recent National Democratic Convention at St. Louis occurs the following plank:

We demand that the modern principles of prison reform be applied in our Federal penal system. We favor such work for prisoners as shall give them training in remunerative occupations so that they may make an honest living when released from prison; the setting apart of the net wages of the prisoner to be paid to his dependent family or to be reserved for his own use upon his release; the liberal extension of the principles of Federal parole law, with due regard to the welfare of the prisoner and the interests of society; the adoption of the probation system, especially in the case of first offenders not convicted of serious crimes.

The introduction of such a plank into the platform of a great political party is highly encouraging, no matter whether we regard it as a sincere statement of policy or as a mere bid for votes. In the one case it holds out the hope that something may be done to place our Federal penal system on a scientific basis; on the other, it is an admission that the prison reformers have enough votes to make them worth considering.

As most of our readers are but beginners in this subject a few explanations may be in place. The Democratic plank has reference only to Federal prisoners, not to those of the individual states. Inmates of Federal penitentiaries are those who have been convicted in United States courts for violation of some Federal statute passed by Congress. In every Federal district there is a United States court, under the supervision of the Department of Justice in Washington, presided over by a judge who is a Federal official, and in which the prosecuting attorney is likewise a Federal official. If you rob a house, you are tried in a local court, responsible to the state, and sent to a state prison. If you rob a postoffice, which is a Federal institution, you are tried in a United States court and sent to a Federal penitentiary. In the former case the governor of the state has the power to pardon or commute the sentence; in the latter it is only the President of the United States who can do anything for you. A State governor cannot pardon a person convicted of offense against a national law committed within his state. On the other hand the President cannot interfere in behalf of one

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sentenced under a state law, unless indeed, as has happened, by making a recommendation to the governor, which the latter is in no way compelled to regard. It may be added that offenses committed in a territory are subjects for United States courts.

There are three Federal penitentiaries, at Leavenworth, at Atlanta, and at McNeill Island, Washington. There are also several military prisons, the one at Fort Leavenworth being often confused in the popular mind with that at Leavenworth. These military prisons, however, belong in a different category and need not be considered.

The three Federal penitentiaries, however, do not contain all who are convicted in United States courts. The Government places a considerable number of convicts in state prisons, where it pays their board and lodging under contract with the several state governments. Here they are held, sometimes for the entire term of their sentence, sometimes until they are transferred to one of the Federal prisons. There were, for example, at the beginning of this year 66 Federal prisoners confined in the Eastern State Penitentiary of Pennsylvania.

The principle on which Federal prisoners are confined in state prisons does not appear to be well defined. It is without doubt largely a matter of economy. To transport a convict from a distant point to one of the three Federal penitentiaries is a matter of considerable expense. It means not only car fare for the convict, but for as many guards as may be deemed necessary to prevent his escape en route, with return expenses for the latter. Besides the Government has to pay for sending the discharged prisoner home on his release. It is often cheaper, especially with those having but short terms to serve, to board them out in a local prison. Women are confined in state prisons, the Government not having as yet a prison for women.

The position of Federal prisoners confined in state institutions is somewhat interesting. They are subject to the Federal parole law and to a possible extension of clemency on the part of the President. They do not have the benefit of state regulations allowing reduction of time for good behavior or of a possibly more liberal state parole law. In all of these things they are under the control of the Department of Justice in Washington. As regards discipline they are treated precisely as the prisoners of the state. They must eat the same food, wear the same clothes, live in the same cells and conform to the local customs regarding labor or idleness; they must suffer the same penalties for infraction of the rules.

This anomaly may be and frequently is the cause of considerable injustice. In sentencing a man to prison, some account should be taken of the kind of treatment he is to receive. Three years in one prison may be harder to bear than five years in another. The Federal prisons have a fairly good reputation as far as the

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treatment of inmates is concerned. A term spent in a cell at Atlanta is quite a different matter from a term spent in one of the loathsome boxes provided for the inmates of Sing Sing. An inmate of a Federal prison is allowed to write one letter a week. If he is lodged in Sing Sing he can write as often as he wishes; in the Pennsylvania penitentiary he is allowed to write one letter a month, while if in Auburn, he is subject to utterly unreasonable and arbitrary interference with his writing privileges, quite worthy of the dark ages. No matter how antiquated or harsh the rules, or how arbitrary the officials may be he has to submit; he is one of the family, not a guest.

On the other hand, the plan of placing Federal prisoners in state prisons could be made the source of much benefit to the convict as well as to society, if rationally carried out, for the following reason.

At present the Federal prisons have no system of employment for inmates. This does not mean that they are kept in idleness. A community of a thousand men has a large variety of needs and the men are occupied in meeting them. If a new building is being erected they can be utilized in the thousand ways necessary in construction. There is work for stone breakers, carpenters, masons, painters, plumbers, electricians. The prisoners require clothing, hence the need for a tailor shop. There must be a laundry, a kitchen, a garden, an office with clerks, a machine shop, a hospital. A very large part of the men are thus able to find employment of one sort or another and to pick up information which may be of use to them later.

This is very primitive. It is not sufficient that a community of a thousand men should be merely self-supporting, and in this instance it is not even that. It should not only provide for its own needs, including board and lodging and clothing, but it should produce a surplus, to be sold for the benefit of the institution and for the payment of wages to the inmates. The production of a surplus would hardly be possible without the division of labor which characterizes our modern communities and which makes for efficiency. It is not economy to take the men as they come in and put them at any odd job quite irrespective of their past occupations or future needs. A penal institution cannot be economically administered on the principle of trying to produce all it needs within itself. The law of producing certain commodities in excess and of trading them off for others must hold here just as it does in the outside world. Putting stone walls about a group of men cannot alter economic laws, and the government which thinks it does will have to pay for its experiment.

Prison labor presents a difficult problem in this respect. In the outside world the man who is proficient in some special kind of labor drifts to the place where that kind of labor is in demand. The

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structural iron worker does not hang around in a village of a thousand inhabitants waiting for a chance to work on a sky-scraper, nor does he take to plumbing or tailoring—he goes where his services are needed. Our whole industrial system owes a large part of its efficiency to the freedom with which laborers can move from where they are not needed to where they are.

How different it is with the prison! The men are there, not because they can find employment and work efficiently, but for reasons which have no connection whatever with their legitimate occupations. The prison administration has to select from the material which drifts in through process of law. Perhaps a couple of dentists are needed. If there is but one, the teeth of the prisoners must suffer and they must be put in a dark cell or otherwise punished because they are irritable from toothache. If a third dentist comes, he must be put in the laundry, the kitchen, the tailor shop, or the jute mill. If there happens to be one tailor too many he must work in the garden or at driving nails.

Economically this is absurd. While it is true that a large portion of the prison population consists of unskilled men, still there are many who have training or at least aptitudes in certain directions. To make a dentist forget his profession in order to become an indifferent tailor is the worst sort of policy; it means time wasted in undoing and doing over. Imagine that you have spent years of your life in acquiring skill in a certain sort of work and that you are compelled to stop this for a period of years; is it not obvious that your deftness will fade, that in the interval new methods will be devised and that when you are free again you will find yourself behind the times, a back number whom nobody will employ?

The payment of rational wages to convicts, which the Democratic plank calls for, and which is eminently just, not only in itself, but because it affords the family a means of support and gives the man himself an opportunity of accumulating something on which to start afresh, to tide him over the difficult period following his discharge, implies efficiency, and this means specialization. It is one thing to run a factory with skilled workmen and quite another to run a trade school. If reasonable wages are to be paid, there must be not only efficiency, but there must be the possibility of concentrating in certain prisons those men who have training or at least aptitude in trades which are in operation there; there must be something approximating to the freedom of movement which exists among non-convicts.

In this we see a possible justification of the Government plan of farming out Federal prisoners in state institutions. Every man, on being sentenced, should be examined as to his previous training and possibilities. If he understands a part of shoe making he should go to some point where shoes are being made. If he is a

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dentist, he should be sent to a prison where he can be employed without interrupting his adopted work, and which does not happen to number a dentist among its inmates.

Every state has its state prison—some two or more. Besides there are so-called reformatories and workhouses, all of them prisons in reality. Convicts are sent to these according to the nature of their offense, or their age, but with little regard to what they are best fitted to do when there. A plain drunk goes to the workhouse for a month or more, while a burglar goes to the penitentiary for a term of years and the young incorrigible to the reformatory. Practically no effort is made to correlate these institutions from the standpoint of economic efficiency. The whole matter is in a state of chaos.

A system of exchange or transfer of convicts from one state to another is likely to arrive about the time of the Millenium, but it would be eminently sensible, for it would admit of greater specialization and efficiency in prison industries, with the resulting advantage to the convict and economy to the state. But it is not utopian to hope that the Federal Government will extend its present plan of farming out prisoners with this object in view and with due consideration for the kind of treatment they shall receive. Administration of justice is one thing; administration of a penal system from the standpoint of economic efficiency is quite another; it is a business, not a legal proposition. Putting the management of prisons under the Department of Justice is quite on a par with placing the railroads, the army or the agricultural interests of the nation under the same Department. What we need is a Federal Prison Commission or Bureau which should handle these matters from an economic standpoint, a Commission composed of business men instead of second rate lawyers, and which should as far as possible work for co-operation among the states in the development of prison industries on the principles which regulate all other industries and which should include the transfer of prison labor to those points where it can be used most efficiently. Parallel with this would be the reorganization of the Federal prisons, either as trade schools, or as centers for such industries as would naturally flourish in that locality were the walls abolished.

This is but a single point. The reform of the parole law, sadly needed, the introduction of the probation system for Federal offenders, and the adoption of the public defender system in United States courts, not touched on in the Democratic platform, these are separate chapters.

Registered LEAGUE Membership Number, July 6th, 4,461.

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Important Notice to Prisoners about the Critic

Owing to the needless and growing expense incurred by continuing to send the CRITIC to inmates who have either left without notifying us, or who do not care to receive it, hereafter every prison member will be dropped from the list *at the end of one year,* unless he notifies us about that time, either directly or through his correspondent or another inmate, that he desires to have it continued. A reminder will be sent at the time.

The CRITIC will not be sent to inmates who are not corresponding with members, except upon payment of the regular subscription. Correspondents will be furnished on request.

A Short Talk to Members—*Not* By the Editor

Since taking up the work of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE, I have given two "talks" on the subject to small assemblages of women, to whom it was entirely new and whose interest had to be awakened. This is very different. I am speaking, through the medium of the CRITIC, to all the members of the LEAGUE, which is growing to be a very sizable organization, and your interest does not need to be aroused; *you* know, at least in a degree, what we are doing, what it means, what it amounts to and what results we can show. I am thoroughly alive to the privilege of talking to all my friends of the LEAGUE, men and women, "ins" and "outs," and there is only one person whom I shall ask to absent himself: Dr. Stokes, will you kindly withdraw!

Now, friends, relieved of the embarrassment of any criticism from the Editor, this is what I want to say to you. The LEAGUE now numbers approximately 4,000, of which some 1,700 are outside members. The number of inmates of the prisons is about 150,000. Each outside member takes care of from one to four inside members, which leaves considerably over 147,000 yet to be cheered, influenced, inspired, uplifted. How is it going to be done? Why, Dr. Stokes is going to hustle round and get correspondents for them, etc., etc. Dr. Stokes—yes. We certainly do not know of any one else who is sacrificing practically everything in life to do it! But I can tell you, dear friends, that even the phenomenal energy, industry, executive ability and self-denial of a man like Dr. Stokes have their limits—and he has about reached them. He has come to the point where "something must be done.." Do you think he ought to be obliged to "cut down the work one-half and ignore not only the prisoners but even new members?" Well, how can we help it? On the part of the inside members, by carefully noting the suggestions Dr. Stokes makes in the CRITIC and following them, by being loyal to the aims of the LEAGUE and appreciative of the privileges which it secures to them; on the part of the outside members, in just one way: you MUST CONTRIBUTE. Yes, I know this

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gives you a chilly feeling; but we cannot let this work deteriorate for want of a little systematic monetary assistance on the part of each individual member. Dr. Stokes needs addition to his office force to enable him to handle the work and not continue to overtax his strength; and bills for printing and postage, which are heavy, must be met.

Never have we had such an opportunity for the work of loving kindness and mercy among prisoners as that which this organization with Dr. Stokes to direct it affords; it is a noble work, a precious privilege, and we must exert ourselves to keep it not only alive, but flourishing; and this must be accomplished without the absolute sacrifice of the one man who has made it possible for all of us to share in its blessings. Think it over; do a little figuring—but don't let it go at that. Each one of us has his personal responsibility staring him in the face.

MARIANA SEAMAN

New York, June, 1916

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THE FEDERAL PRISONS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

We demand that the modern principles of prison reform be applied in our Federal penal system.

—Democratic Platform

What the the modern principles of prison reform?

They are many, but they may be summed up in a few words:

1. The prison should be partly an educational institution the function of which is to convert delinquents into useful citizens, making the fullest possible use of the time during which they are confined. It should therefore be conducted on the principles which regulate other schools, with due allowance for the class of pupils which it contains.

2. The prison should be partly a factory, a workshop, and should be conducted on the business and economic principles which regulate production and distribution elsewhere, with due consideration for the class of workers employed and the restrictions which hamper them.

3. Nothing is justifiable in prison which does not contribute to the betterment of the inmates and their efficiency as social units, during and after their confinement.

Our Federal prisons are a disgrace to the nation, for while it is freely admitted that the inmates are reasonably well cared for—as are the cattle in a sanitary dairy—practically no attempt is made in the direction of the upbuilding of the inmates and in giving them a fresh start. And for this our notion that prison administration is a legal problem and a proper function of the national Department of Justice is largely responsible.

The management of Federal prisons has always been a function of this Department, a branch of the legal mechanism of the country. What could be more natural? Nobody can deny that it is the duty of this Department to bring to account those who are guilty of violating Federal laws; it is a point which does not admit of argument.

It is therefore natural that having imposed sentence the same

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authority should also be expected to make some disposition of the offender. As long as the convict is regarded as a walking corpse it matters little who buries him—the Attorney General might as well perform the function of an undertaker as any one else. We can imagine the parallel existing in a primitive community where the doctor should be required to dispose of the bodies of his victims.

If I should propose to you to place the building of battleships, the construction of public buildings or the prevention of hog cholera under the direction of the Attorney General of the United States, if I should state that it is proper and rational that a man of exclusively legal training, whose present duties are handling the legal business of the Government, is the right person to have the final say about the calibre of a gun or the use of a new serum, you would set me down as an ass at once. But when this same legal gentleman is supposed to be the right one to judge of the complex educational, business and economic problems involved in a rational penal system, you take it as a matter of course. And why? Simply because it has always been so. One might almost infer that under our present system of government entire ignorance of the subjects with which he is to deal is the chief qualification in selecting a Cabinet officer. What was our present Secretary of the Navy? A journalist. Our Secretary of the Treasury? A lawyer. Our Postmaster General? A lawyer. Our Secretary of the Interior? A lawyer. Our Secretary of War? An ex-mayor and God knows what else except a military man. One wonders why the Attorney General is not a manufacturer or a newspaper-man. But at any rate these various chiefs are expected to devote their entire time to subjects within their own province; they are not burdened with irrelevant problems.

Now, how does the matter really stand? Bringing offenders to justice is a legal matter beyond the least doubt. But when the man is once convicted and sentenced, there the legal aspect ceases wholly. The only further concern which the Department of Justice can rationally have in the matter is with questions of appeal, of parole, of pardon. Once the man is sentenced, the question becomes one, not of law, but of economics, of education, of what disposition to make of him so that he shall not be a burden to society, so that he shall be converted, if possible, into a law abiding and useful citizen.

The management of Federal prisons, therefore, presents two aspects. The one is educational. The prisoner must not only be submitted to such discipline as will deter him from further offenses, but he must be trained, if need be, so that he can, if he is willing, become a useful member of society. If he is illiterate, he must be given the fundamentals of an education; if he is unskilled, he must be taught a trade, and not one which is temporary only, but one

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which he may reasonably hope to pursue when he becomes free. These things should not be optional; they should be compulsory. The other aspect is economic. He must be employed in such a fashion as will best fit in with any previous training or proclivities, as far as possible; the administration of the prison must obey the economic laws which regulate production and distribution elsewhere; his family must not be left a burden on the community and he himself discharged penniless and with every incentive to fall back into his old ways; he must be paid reasonable wages for the work he does, a course which is possible only if the trades pursued in prison are run on an economic basis, not as a mere means of keeping him employed.

There are approximately three thousand Federal prisoners. This represents the size of a large university, a large factory. It used to be the notion that anybody would do for a college president if his religion was right, and within my memory—and even today in some places—a knowledge of theology was considered as vastly more important than a mastery of the principles of education. We are getting over that, and the reason we were not forced to do so long before is that it was generally possible to find some rich church members who would pay for the folly. That we have never committed the blunder of putting a clergyman or a lawyer at the head of a manufacturing business is simply that if we did, the concern would go straight to perdition. But to put a lawyer at the head of the Federal penal system, a system which should be university and factory combined and which requires mastery of both, that seems all right, and it seems so simply because the prisons have the public exchequer back of them and the public pays for the blunders. The Federal prisons, educationally and economically considered, have gone to perdition long ago, but they are kept alive by a liberal use of juice from the Treasury.

If if takes the entire time of one man to direct a university or a factory, how can it take less than the entire time of at least one man to run the prisons as they should be run?

This is a nation of over one hundred millions. The legal business of the Government is something of astounding magnitude; it is quite enough to absorb the entire time and energy and thought of even the wisest and most competent Attorney General. To force on him such duties as are involved in the educational and business administration of the Federal prisons is utterly irrational. Not only has he no time to give to considering such problems, but the legal business must suffer if he does.

In witness of this consider the address of the Attorney General before the inmates of Atlanta Penitentiary (*Good Words*, July, 1915). The address is over a year old, yet absolutely nothing has been done. Mr. Gregory admits that he is so busy that he frequently has to do the parole work—possibly a proper function of his

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department—at nights and on Sundays. If so, how can he be in a position to form a rational opinion on the business and educational administration of prisons? And his speech shows it. He suggests that a good occupation for the inmates of Federal prisons would be making tents for the army. Tents, mind you! If he had said shoes for the army it would have been more sensible. Every man, woman and child in the United States wears shoes. To train a convict in the trade of making shoes is to teach him something which he can reasonably hope to continue when released, so that he will not be driven to crime again for want of means to do better. But tents! Apart from the army the demand for tents is small—they are used by a few summer vacationists and by vendors of ice cream and peanuts at picnics—but with the demands of the army met by the prisons, tentmaking would hardly be a trade which any large number of men would select. Life prisoners might make tents and be assured of a steady job, but there are strictly speaking no life prisoners in the Federal prisons, every lifer being eligible for parole at the end of fifteen years.

The crying, shrieking moral of this address of Mr. Gregory is, that an Attorney General has not the time to form a rational opinion on these problems and that it is childish to make him in any way responsible in the matter. The man upon whom the responsibility for these things rests should not be a figurehead; he should not be one who is not in a position to do more than mechanically affix his signature or to recommend to Congress what somebody tells him is advisable. The development of a prison policy demands one who has the time to do a little original thinking, based on a real grasp of the subject. The development of a prison policy demands only to a limited extent, if at all, a mastery of the ways by which men are put into prison, but it does require a thorough knowledge of what is being done, what should and should not be done with them after they are in prison.

We may evolve a sensible Federal system in time, but it will come only with the appointment of a permanent Federal Prison Commission with wide powers, composed of experts in education, technical and otherwise, in business and in economics and which shall be in a position to devote its entire time to running the Federal prisons and disposing of Federal prisoners. It should be composed of men who not only understand such matters, but who are sufficiently broadminded and sympathetic to see the difficulties under which the convict has labored and still labors and who can work in a whole-souled way for their remedy. The very last man in the world for such a position is one whose duties are or have been those of prosecuting attorney. The Commission should be in a position to study thoroughly the penal systems of the different states and of foreign countries and to work for cooperation be-

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tween the states in developing a sensible system of utilizing prison labor.

It would be folly to waste time in making half-digested and costly experiments which would have to be undone. In my opinion the very first step which Congress should take in the matter is to authorize the appointment of such a permanent Commission and not to legislate about the prisons until this Commission has had time to make recommendations.

Our Last Letter From Sing Sing

I reproduce here verbatim about the last letter we received from an inmate of Sing Sing before the general order of the Superintendent of the New York State Prisons, forbidding inmates to correspond with women. It may be added by way of explanation that the writer is a foreigner. This is what Superintendent Carter proposes to put a stop to.

Dear Dr. Stokes:— June 25 ,1916

I believe I owe you an apology as I was one of those like St. Thomas—see, touch, and then believing. The only excuse I can claim is: I have passed many years here and I became quite sceptical so, it was very hard for me to believe at anything, after even relations of mine had disappointed me.

When a friend of mine told me to write to the O. E. League to get a friend correspondent, I said: go on, I don't believe at nobody anymore, the World is going upsidedown, relations, friends all are dead, and that just because I am bury alive, they never thinks that someday that one is a living thing again.

Now, if you don't mind, I will give you a first class idea of our way of thinking of having correspondents; my friend correspondent seem to know just how to go along in this good Christianity work of exchange letters, a prisoner want to have somebody, a friend outside the prison walls to which he might write, he suppose to be lonely without friends or family so, a wise, intelligent correspondent (like mine) try to interest him in "her or his" family, that way a man (or a woman) have something to think about, the true of this statement you may find very easily, if you will take the trouble of writing to whom (and they are many) you have helped.

For my part I will thank you ever so much of having putted me in directed communication with the best lady in the world, as I am quite contented if not happy since receiving message after message from her, she is just showing the true spirit of the truth faith of Christianity.

Dear Sir, There are some correspondents which after their first or second letter won't write anymore, you know, they may don't like the way he write his letters, or maybe they didn't found the *one* correspondent which they thought they would, may it was not the ideal correspondent which was in their changeable heads

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etc; but, I don't think that's the proper way to go about the poor unfortunates who, instead of getting some comfort from outside world the only thing he really get is more and more disappointment, which, by the way, he calles fake.

Anyway, I ain't anymore a pessimist about the LEAGUE, and I will take everything back like a man without to be ashame to say that I was wrong, I do acknowledge my mistaken and I am glad in saying that after all the World is not so bad as it looked.

I remain sincerely yours, P.

To Members Corresponding With Clinton or Sing Sing

We are authoritatively informed that the new Superintendent of Prisons of the State of New York has issued a general order forbidding inmates to write to or receive letters from women other than those of their immediate families. I call attention to the fact that it affects, so far as we are concerned, nearly two hundred inmates of Clinton and six hundred of Sing Sing.

This decision of the Superintendent is confessedly based on a small number of intercepted letters which have been submitted to him, and which in his opinion are objectionable, but without the least regard to the large volume of such correspondence, which, being unobjectionable, has passed on and naturally could not be inspected by him. If prison censorship means anything at all, it means weeding out the improper letters and allowing the proper ones to reach their destination. Among a large number of men there must of necessity be some who abuse their privileges. To regulate these is what the censorship is for. To stop all correspondence because an occasional inmate goes beyond bounds is to confess not only the censorship, but the administration itself, a failure. There is not the least evidence forthcoming that the objectionable letters were addressed to, or came from members of the LEAGUE, and it would probably prove, as it has in most other instances, that this is not the case.

I strongly urge those of our members who have found that communication with inmates of New York prisons has ceased without obvious reason, to write a letter of protest to James M. Carter. Superintendent of Prisons, Albany, N. Y. It may have no effect, but it is at least calculated to show that you are not all fools.

New York is but a small corner of our work and if those who have found their efforts to help prisoners thwarted by this arbitrary interruption of their correspondence, will write to us, new names will be given at the earliest possible moment.

THE HUMANITARIANS—the big new movement for getting work for discharged prisoners. See the next CRITIC. Prison members may write to us for information.

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My contribution is to be used

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE HUMANITARIANS — A NEW MOVE IN PRISON REFORM

Prisoners' aid associations, both of local and wider scope, have existed in this country for many years. The Pennsylvania Prison Society, for instance, is 129 years old. It cannot be said that they have been a howling success, although they have helped many a man across the rough threshold of freedom. Notwithstanding these organizations, numberless prisoners are turned loose every year without employment secured in advance and with nothing but a five or ten dollar bill between them and a "relapse." They are turned loose with the necessity of picking up any odd job they can find, and with the strong probability that if their record becomes known to their employers they will be shown the door.

Why is this? Go to an employment agency and tell them that you are an ex-con, or get a job for yourself and then tell your employer that you have been in jail, and you won't be long in finding one reason. It is distrust of the convict. Nobody wants a man who has been in prison, no matter why.

Another reason is the cost of conducting an employment bureau for prisoners. It is hard enough to get work for a man with testimonials, but when the only testimonial is a prison record, it is doubly hard. Somebody has to pay the cost; the money must come from the public, in part, at least, and the public is still indifferent when not positively hostile. A well known organization, the Central Howard Association of Chicago, finds that it costs it on an average $6.62 to place a discharged prisoner. That would seem little enough to pay for remaking a man, but there is not enough money to go round.

Still another reason is that the prisoner is frequently uninformed as to the ways of going about getting work. The aid associations have their hands full with those who apply—they are not in a position to go hunting for more. Instead of helping him the state frequently throws obstacles in his way. Here is California. It will not allow the paroled prisoner to leave the state in search of work, and it does not allow inmates to read California newspapers.

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The very first place Mr. Out-Of-A-Job looks is in the newspaper, but the state says No. Then comes correspondence. Most states limit the prisoner to writing one letter a week or one a month. How far will one letter a week go with the inmate looking for work? If I write a letter to an inmate of a prison in a certain state not a thousand miles from here, offering to help him get a job, that letter will be returned to me *unopened;* it is not even given the honor of being censored.

It is certain that nobody cares as much for the prisoner as the prisoner himself. Logically, therefore, an organization for securing employment should originate with and be largely managed by the inmates themselves. There have been difficulties in the way of this, not because there are no men in prison capable of engineering it, but because of tradition and red tape. Prisoners are not allowed to communicate with inmates of other prisons. The mere thought of an association of inmates extending through different prisons is something to paralyze an oldtime warden.

This year witnesses the birth of the first prisoners' aid association originated by prisoners and having its headquarters in a prison. The place? The Kansas State Penitentiary, a liberally conducted institution where tradition is not allowed to get in the way of commonsense. The men? Winston Salisbury, an inmate of university training and boundless persistence; Howard A. Schapper, better known as "Tex," editor of *The Square Deal*, the Kansas Penitentiary paper; a sympathetic warden, a broad-minded governor, several prison officials; a National Council composed of men big in business and public life. But I am taking your time when you should be reading what "Tex" has to say about THE HUMANITARIANS.

The Better Way

WHAT THE HUMANITARIANS PROPOSE TO DO FOR THE RELEASED PRISONER

By Howard A. Schapper, Lansing, Kansas

Under the old penal system a man was kicked out of prison upon the expiration of his sentence with a shoddy suit, a five-case note, a broken spirit and a bad reputation. No good was expected from him; no one wished to take a chance of being robbed or murdered by giving him honest employment; no one cared to associate with him; he was expected to be bad clean down to the core and in the course of events he generally managed to behave as badly as was expected.

"Give a dog a bad name and then shoot him," is an old axiom and it applies to mankind as well. Many a man has gone to the gallows because some one gave him a bad name. Every ex-convict was liable to suspicion. The very fact that he had been in prison

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was almost enough evidence to send him back if a crime was committed in the community where he lived. Under such conditions few, very few, men succeeded in regaining a respectable position in society after once having endured the rigors of penal servitude.

Such conditions bred an army of recidivists. Sixty per cent of the 150,000 men who constitute the permanent population of our prisons are "repeaters." Many of them were first convicted during the tender years of childhood. From the reform school to the reformatory, to the penitentiary, thence to other penitentiaries is the usual formula. The percentage of men released from prison in the past who have traveled the road called *straight* is discouragingly small.

There is a reason for this alarming condition. Prisons were punitive institutions pure and simple. Punishment was meted out with an iron hand regardless of circumstances. The first offender, the so-called habitual criminal, the degenerate and criminally insane were herded together in the same enclosure under exactly the same system of repression and demoralization. No effort worthy of the name was made to correct the faults which led to the prisoner's incarceration.

Heart-breaking toil was theirs; they labored like hard driven beasts that the coffers of the state or the pockets of the jackal tribe known as "prison contractors" might be well filled. In return for the labor of their heads and hands they received bed and board, and plenty of abuse. The "trades" they learned in prison were those which could be profitably pursued only in prison. To work at such trades these prison journeymen must return to prison. The educational advantages enjoyed in prison were on a par with the "trades" taught. No sensible method of instruction was in vogue. Haphazard hit-or-miss schooling failed, as it has always failed. Morals were blunted, sensibilities deadened, and the manhood crushed out of these wards of the state in the prison tread-mill.

After undergoing a term of years in prison the prisoner was released. Thrown suddenly upon his own resources without friends, money or the means of earning an honest living he failed in life's battle. Business men knowing the lack of efficiency manifest in the operation of prison industries hesitated to employ a man who had worked under such conditions. When they did employ him the hustle and bustle of modern methods took him off his feet and he lost his job. Lacking the initiative and stamina demanded in every zone of human endeavor, the prison graduate drifted into the only vocation open to him—crime. Even as a criminal he was a failure, for crime requires the same energy, nerve and resourcefulness required in more respectable professions.

So the "ex-con" drifted along the fringes of the underworld until the Law claimed him for a victim and he became once more a "con." From prison to prison he flitted, a little more hardened,

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a little more demoralized, and a little more inefficient with each repeated incarceration. The cost of preventing crime and detecting criminals assumed gigantic proportions. Millions of dollars were expended annually to maintain our judicial system. Still the waste of money and manhood appeared to increase.

Men with brains and ability sought to solve the problem, but on every hand they met the determined opposition of those who had fattened on the misfortunes of others. Prisons were political assets, the prisoners mere pawns in the game. Instead of being reformative checks upon crime the prisons were breeding places for crime and criminals.

For years the Old System withstood the battering ram of public opinion. Entrenched behind its barriers of graft and greed it fought desperately for existence. Reformers were discredited and disgraced. No decent man could afford to mix in prison affairs. Even newspapers who insisted on openness and fairness were made to feel the weight of the machine's displeasure.

Then came the revolution. All over the country the subject of prison reform was discussed and debated. The clamor for improved conditions finally broke the back of the System which would not yield an inch. A new age of penal management was ushered in. With the New Penology came the trade schools and up-to-date educational advantages. The Prison Press became a power to be reckoned with. It voiced in unmistakable tones the dearest wishes of the submerged tenth. Its pages held the attention and interest of men high in the social scale.

"Give us a square deal?" the prisoners asked. "Not only a square deal while in prison but after we leave prison."

And business men everywhere are willing to do just that, provided always, that the prisoner is willing to fit himself while in prison to take up the duties of citizenship when released from prison. The ex-prisoner will be given the same chance his luckier brother gets and no more. To insure his getting that THE HUMANITARIANS, a national association, chartered under the laws of the State of Kansas, was organized.

The idea originated in the brain of a man who has been in and out of prison. He knows the conditions which have made it almost impossible for a man leaving four walls behind him to make good along legitimate lines. He has been through the mill. In the face of many discouragements, Winston Salisbury perfected the plans and succeeded in interesting notable men in the movement from behind prison walls.

The crying need for an organization which will help broken men to help themselves is apparent. Large employers of labor all over the country have signified their willingness to help. Two hundred and fifty firms in twenty states stand pledged to furnish employment to prison members of the association upon the recom-

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mendation of the proper officials. Not only will employment at living wages be furnished but transportation to the situation will be provided whenever necessary.

Behind the work are such men as Governors Hunt of Arizona, Dunne of Illinois, Capper of Kansas, and ExGovernor Foss of Massachusetts. Attorney-General Gregory of Washington has commended the plan. Dr. H. N. Stokes of the O. E. L. League of Washington, is a member of the National Council, as are Messrs. Hunt, Dunne, and Foss.

Other well known men of humanitarian principles have been invited to become life members. Any person interested in the prison problem may become a select member. Any prisoner who fills certain fundamental requirements may become an institutional member. The membership fees are $50, $2 and $1 respectively.

The Prison Press has been a strong supporter of the organization from its infancy. *Good Words* of Atlanta, *The New Era* of Leavenworth, *Lend A Hand* of Salem, Oregon, *The Index* of Monroe, Wash.; *The Prison Monitor* of Windsor, Vt.; and other prison periodicals have endorsed the movement highly. The outside press has been equally enthusiastic.

Any one interested in the work of THE HUMANITARIANS as outlined above can secure full particulars of the association and its activities by communicating with E. C. Landis, Treasurer, Lansing, Kansas, who will be pleased to take the matter up with prospective members personally.

More Correspondents Needed

For a time it looked as if our waiting list of prisoners would be replaced by a waiting list of correspondents.

But the tide has turned. We are getting a roaring flood of applications from prisons, while the stream of new correspondents has petered out to a sickly driblet.

Really, it should not be necessary for me to go begging you to make some effort to interest your friends. Every member of the LEAGUE ought to get at least two new members, and most could, if they devoted to it one-tenth of the time and effort spent in deciding how they shall enjoy themselves. Don't limit yourself to telling them how interesting it is—so is the newspaper, the movies, the latest fashion book. Show them some of the letters you get; tell them how the prisoner is enjoying the hot weather, locked in his 8 by 4½ cell, limited year in and year out to a space of a few acres, often with not a friend to send a word from the outside world. Don't allow your "fine glow of feeling to evaporate" in the gratification you may personally get from this work; it is but self-gratification unless you get others to share it.

Registered LEAGUE membership number, August 3d, 4,790.

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Is This Your Style?

William James, late Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, in writing on "Habit," says:

"When a resolve or a fine glow of feeling is allowed to evaporate without bearing practical fruit it is worse than a chance lost; it works so as positively to hinder future resolutions and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge. There is no more contemptible type of human character than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer, who spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility and emotion, but who never does a manly concrete deed."

Those who have been corresponding with prisoners—deriving unpurchasable pleasure from the work—who do not contribute substantially toward the upkeep of the association through which this enjoyment has been made possible, are aptly described in the last sentence of the above quoted paragraph.

No excuse can be offered for not putting aside a small sum each time a letter from the prisoner is received, the entire amount to be sent each month to the LEAGUE. This would be "a manly concrete deed,"—it would be the "practical fruit" resultant from the "fine glow of feeling" these letters always bring,—it would assist in strengthening the character and thereby would be of direct material benefit to the giver.

In the words of the Scriptures "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Think this over.

A. M. GOLDZIER.

Do You Want A Job?

If you are a prisoner and want a job ready for you when you go out, and if you are determined to make good, it will interest you to know that we are now in a position to help you. The LEAGUE is not officially connected with THE HUMANITARIANS, but the Editor of the CRITIC is a member of the National Council of THE HUMANITARIANS, and will be glad to do what he can to help our prison members to get into their good graces.

Now, you know THE HUMANITARIANS are not going to give you a recommendation to an employer unless they think you worth it; they could not afford to do so and it would not be straight. First of all they will count on what the officials of your institution say about you, but if you have good friends outside what they say will count also. The Secretary writes us: "Endorsements and recommendations of members of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE will certainly carry great weight in our work of placing prisoners, and we shall welcome such recommendations."

Prisoners who belong to our LEAGUE will get whatever benefit may properly come from the endorsement of their correspondents; if you have made friends among our members you can count on

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them to recommend you if you have shown yourself worth it. If you are a good risk THE HUMANITARIANS will not only find you a position, but will help you to get to the place, if necessary.

If you are going out in six months, or a year or more, the best thing you can do, next to becoming a HUMANITARIAN, is to get aboard with us, so that you can have our endorsement when the time comes.

Sensible Advice To Our Members

We suggest to those of our members who are in the habit of giving a little financial aid to prisoners, or of providing them with articles more or less unnecessary, that one of the best things which can be done for a man soon to leave prison is to get him work in advance. You know, don't you, that most of these men leave prison with only enough money to keep them going but a few days and that when that is gone, if they don't have work they must starve or steal? THE HUMANITARIANS is an organization which hunts up jobs in advance and helps the man to get to the place. This work costs money, and somebody has to pay for it, so THE HUMANITARIANS charge an annual membership fee of one dollar for prisoners. Lots of prisoners don't have a cent and have no means of getting even that dollar. What then is more sensible than to make your prisoner a member, if he has the endorsement of the officials? It is an investment of permanent value, better than picture postcards and plum puddings at Christmas.

To Business Men

The Editor earnestly urges those business men into whose hands this number of the CRITIC may come, and who may have occasion to employ labor, to register their names and the nature of the labor they are likely to require, with the Secretary of THE HUMANITARIANS, Box 2, Lansing, Kansas. It is also suggested that they may have business friends who could be interested and who might be able to give work to some discharged prisoner. It is understood that every prisoner recommended must have the endorsement of the prison officials.

Some Cheap Books

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Moses, Stainton—Spirit Teachings, 1.75 (new, 2.00; out of print; valuable).
Spirit Identity, 1.25 (new, 1.75).
Mukerji—Spiritual Consciousness, .65 (new, 1.10).

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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BY

The O. E. Library League

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE HOLE IN THE DOUGHNUT

FAUST

Who art thou, then?

MEPHISTOPHELES

Part of that Power, not understood,
Which always wills the Bad, and always works the Good.

FAUST

What hidden sense in this enigma lies?

MEPHISTOPHELES

I am the Spirit that Denies!
And justly so: for all things, from the Void
Called forth, deserve to be destroyed.

—*Goethe; Faust*

"Pins," said Mary, "have saved lots of lives by not swallowing them."

A very silly remark, apparently, but one which hides a great truth.

Have you ever noticed that the Holy Trinity is not a monopoly of the Christian Religion? In fact, so far from it, several of the great religions have their Trinities. Take your choice; each has its value and its inner meaning; each is an attempt to express certain philosophic truths about the nature of things. One of the most interesting of these Trinities is that of the Hindu religion—Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Very roughly speaking, Brahma is the equivalent of "God the Father" and Vishnu of "God the Son," but for Shiva we of the West have no equivalent. Shiva is "The Destroyer." True, we have the devil, but in our contempt for him we have ousted him from his rightful place in the Trinity. It is no part of my task to discuss the variations on these ideas. What I want to call attention to is the fact that Destruction is quite as essential a function in evolution as is Creation.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfills himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

How petty are our notions of a God who is not completely

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the Master of his own creation! How really irreverent is the assumption that that which we call evil exists, not with, but against the will of the Absolute! Not so. All that we call ugly and hateful and sinful, the fire and tempest, war, the microbe, the tiger, the wart-hog, the murderer, even that which we call the devil, all of these exist as agents of the great Brahma for accomplishing a purpose which we can as yet but dimly perceive. Who is the man of faith? Surely not he who is in fear and trembling lest Satan get the upperhand.

"It must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!"—an old saying and a true one. Mephistopheles, "the Spirit that Denies," must needs exist; he performs a highly important role in evolution, but woe to him who is possessed by that spirit. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." The answer to Samson's riddle is the answer to the problem of evil. Evil is the prompting force which calls forth love and progress. An example? It is quite a common thing to hear it said that the necessity for charity is an evil, that if we had more justice we should need less charity; that the state should relieve all ills so that the good citizens can be allowed to enjoy themselves in peace. Absolutely wrong.

In a perfect world there would be nothing to develop the spirit of love. You can never be good in a community in which evil does not exist in some form; you are good because you are fighting the evil, not because the state is fighting it for you. You do not become strong by not being tempted; you get strength by fighting the temptation. And, if evil has its function, so of necessity have those whose thoughts and acts cause this evil. In short, the evil spirit is an absolute necessity as things are at present, however it may be in spheres unknown to us. But "woe to that man by whom the offense cometh," for he must inevitably be himself destroyed.

Let us consider a few cases of "the Spirit that Denies." The pessimist has been wittily defined as "he who sees the hole in the doughnut." He who sees the defects in our social system, or in human nature, is not thereby a pessimist. He becomes a pessimist when he begins to whine over them and to think that the world is going to perdition. Follow the matter up and you will generally find that the real reason is that he is not getting what he wants for himself; it is not that the doughnut has a hole, but because the hole happens to be his portion; in short, it is selfishness. True, it may not be that; it may be just lack of faith that the great Brahma knew what he was about when he made his doughnut with a hole in it; it may be fear that he will let Mephistopheles get the better of him.

Now the great Brahma does not show you the flaw in his creation, the hole in his doughnut, in order that you may sit down

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and whine about it or say that he has made a failure of his job. Quite the contrary. He shows you that flaw because it is a chance for you to get to work and mend it. Do you remember how Aladdin had one of the windows of his magic palace left unfinished, so that his father-in-law the emperor might have that honor? That is one of the reasons why the great Brahma tolerates that which he could without doubt do away with. If you want to be godlike you will thank God that he has left something for you to do, so that you too may be godlike. It does not matter one bit how bad things are; that is none of your affair so long as you are doing your part to make them better. I couldn't possibly be a pessemist with such an honor offered to me as finishing even the least little window in the magic palace of creation. I could not possibly be a pessimist when I am offered the chance of being a coworker with God, nor could I really feel mad at the devil for making such a splendid possibility.

But when I shrink from the task, when I declare the battle lost before I begin to fight, then I am allying myself with "the Spirit that Denies."

How about trust? Nobody can deny for a moment that the trusting person gets fooled now and then; nobody can deny that the winner sometimes loses. Discretion is always in place, but you can't get anywhere without taking some risks. The man who distrusts everybody he meets, who doubts everything he hears, the chronic sceptic, is quite as pernicious and dangerous an individual as the worst whom our prisons harbor. Why? It may not seem to matter much to anybody but himself if he has an everlasting grouch, but the fact is, he poisons everybody. He who goes about with his eternal question mark, tagging it on to the name of everybody he mentions, who quite likely is as good as he, or better, differs but little from the out-and-out defamer. He is a robber. Worse than that. We all have the habit of seeing ourselves as others see us, the poet notwithstanding. Our associates act as mirrors in which we see ourselves. When they distrust us, we unconsciously begin to distrust ourselves, we tend to become that which they imagine we are. But to trust and respect a man means to throw a ray of life-giving sunlight on that part of his nature which needs development—self-confidence and self-respect. It is easy enough to believe in yourself when others believe in you, but only the man of strength can have self-confidence in the face of distrust and suspicion.

Let us consider the prisons. What is one of the most striking things about prison reform? Just this, that where every man is given a chance to act on his honor most of them stand up to the test. We put a man like Osborne or Homer at the head of a prison and what is the result? Nobody who has seen how Sing Sing has developed under Osborne, or Great Meadow under Homer

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can have the least doubt that trust is the greatest of moral medicines.

If on the contrary we place a modern Mephistopheles at the head of a prison, it may be as warden, it may be as superintendent of a system of prisons, what happens? His spirit of distrust spreads to those in his charge. Finding themselves distrusted the men, so far as they have any good in them, soon begin not only to distrust themselves but to distrust others; they begin to look on the world—and most of them have already learned this evil lesson before and largely for the same reason—as a place where there is no good, and to think that the best thing to do is to get through it by hook or crook as best one can. That is one reason why the old-fashioned prison never reformed anybody.

Nothing could possibly be more pernicious than to place a prison in charge of a man who is either a pessimist or a cynic, or who acts as one. You can no more develop good in a prisoner by distrust than you can make a plant grow by putting a brick on it. The official who puts every prisoner under a ban because a few may do wrong and need it is like the gardener who uproots every plant the moment it pokes its nose above ground because here and there may be a weed. Such a proceeding would be absurd, even if nine-tenths of the plants were weeds. The object of a garden is to grow useful plants; whatever rules are adopted, it must be with this view—to give the useful plant a chance. "We can't make exceptions," says this prison horticulturist; "It is our business to protect the public garden from weeds. It is quite true that some of the plants are not weeds, but how can we know that? So, true to our trust, we will pull up everything in sight. We can't be bothered with exceptions."

One of these gentlemen has written to some of our members who have protested against the suppression of correspondence which unquestionably was beneficial and educational in its aims and its visible results: "You will agree that exceptions cannot be made in official rulings." Think of it, ladies and gentlemen! The coiner of this phrase is not where he is for his health or his amusement: he is there to serve the state, not by talking fallacious platitudes and acting on them, but by adapting his rulings to the varied conditions which confront him. To apply to all one rule made for the worst is to pull up the useful plants with the weeds; it is to dose every patient in the hospital with castor oil because a few need a purging; it is to confess his incompetence to carry out the object for which he is hired and for which prisons largely exist—the giving every man a chance to retrieve his reputation—and, instead, to throw the whole lot into the slop barrel. The officer who goes about clubbing every inmate or putting him into a strait-jacket because now and then one is violent, is not in the least different from him who goes about taking their friends from them, and who makes the general rule—to which his official dignity will allow no

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exceptions—that a certain kind of correspondence shall not be allowed because he finds a few who have abused the privilege. Why not refuse all paroles out-and-out, because some men break their parole? Much more sensible would this be, too. It is not possible to send a guard along with each paroled man because now and then one misbehaves—the authorities must run the risk. But with letters it is not so. Every prison has its system of censorship, and rightly, and what is easier than to stop that which is clearly improper, just when, and only when it so proves itself?

The question is not one of making exceptions to official rulings; it is one of making official rulings which do not take account of the exceptions. The man who stands on such an excuse for tyrannizing over those who are helplessly under his control might make a splendid street car conductor, but as an administrator of an institution with moral aims, where the least spark of decency should be cherished, he is a glaring failure. The one use he has is to make things so bad that he will act as an emetic on the system, so that, like Jonah, he will finally be vomited out by the whale which swallowed him. And that, in general, is the use of "the Spirit that Denies." It was not philosophy which saved Faust; it was the effort of Mephistopheles to ruin him.

Request to Prisoners

Inmates who are under the impression that we are conducting a bureau for supplying soul-mates or bank accounts will kindly make their wishes distinctly known in their applications, in order that their letters may find their way into the wastebasket with the least possible delay. We understand and sympathize with the desire of the prisoner for the feminine influence, and it is our wish to gratify it within reasonable bounds, but we are determined at all costs to eliminate those who take this matter too lightly.

Those inmates who attempt to use their correspondents as a source of income will be dropped without notice and similar action recommended to the correspondents. We do not object to appeals for financial help for educational and similar purposes, but requests for funds for legitimate objects should be endorsed by some official who is in a position to express an opinion as to actual needs.

We request those inmates who really understand our aims to use every possible influence to prevent abuses; otherwise it may happen, as it has in New York, that the cow which gives the milk of human kindness will suddenly go dry, to the detriment of the worthy as well. We do not believe for a moment that any of our outside members have been guilty of improprieties, but being in the limelight, we get the blame for everything. He who behaves in an unbecoming manner is therefore a common enemy.

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Some Plain Talk to Members

It has come to our attention that some prisoners—though these are the exception — make requests of their correspondents for money, and many of these requests, in some cases amounting to demands, are emphatically unreasonable. While it is a fact that the men are usually without funds, it is also a fact that the state meets the absolute phyiscal needs of the inmate. To give money indiscriminately and without inquiry is no more to be justified than it would be in the case of the man outside.

Many prisoners are trying to educate themselves and the limited educational facilities in most prisons do not provide for special training or materials. In same cases ill health may call for food or clothing other than that regularly supplied. Such men deserve sympathy and such help as can be given to them. Good literature which can be read and circulated is always in place. But to supply luxuries which the others do not possess is not only productive of jealousies and other feelings which are subversive of good discipline, but it is unfair to the other inmates. A prison is the most democratic place in the world—what one gets should be shared by all. In many cases the money given to inmates for tobacco would be much better spent on their dependent families, who are neither fed, clothed nor lodged by the state, and who often enough have a much harder time of it.

We recommend that those members who are asked for money insist that the request be accompanied by the endorsement of the warden, the chaplain, the physician, an authorized teacher. or other officer of standing and responsibility. The chaplain and the teacher are usually those best acquainted with the mental needs of the inmate, and the physician with his physical needs. The officials are usually glad to help those who need it and to cooperate with those willing to help.

Just because a man happens to be in prison does not excuse him from presenting such evidence as would be demanded of an applicant for free tuition or free treatment in a clinic. If such evidence cannot be obtained it is pretty good proof that the request is unjustified.

Here are some cases:

One man asks for two dollars a week to spend for coffee, sugar and tobacco.

Another wants a pair of store shoes because he is not satisfied with the shoes supplied by the prison.

A third asks for eight dollars to buy drawing supplies, and gets it. A little later he claims that his drawing materials were "taken away from him"—a story which certainly calls for official confirmation—and demands a further eight dollars to replace them!

Just as long as you are willing to meet such requests, which you would refuse to the man on the street without investigation, just

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so far are you not only opening yourself to the charge of pampering or coddling, but you are cultivating the tendency to beg; you are working against the spirit of manliness, self-respect and self-dependence which the prisoner needs, and which it is the aim of rational prison methods to inculcate; just so far you are working against, not for reform. Better drop these men entirely if they persist and let us send you someone else.

Prisoners sometimes ask correspondents to sell articles which they have made. This is a real help, as most of them have no other means of getting funds to enable them to make a fresh start in life, and the prison affords a poor market. Such aid is always in place, when it can be given.

Much of the money sent to inmates thoughtlessly would accomplish vastly greater good if turned into our fund for enabling us more effectively to hunt up those who really need help and to find those able to help them.

Another point. To help a prisoner effectively you must meet him in a sense on his own level. I ask you to consider the case of the Great Friend of Sinners. He placed himself on a par with them, but it is not on record that he considered it needful to use slang or other unbecoming language, or that he was lacking in dignity of that beautiful kind which made every man feel him to be at once his "pal" and his leader. It is not on record that he exchanged photographs or permitted familiar language or handed them cigars. But he did do that which none of these things can do; he made them see that they were men; he gave them a glimpse into the infinite possibilities within them.

Membership in The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired.

Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

The Humanitarians

the big national association which has for its object getting work in advance for prisoners about to be paroled or discharged. It has wide connections with employers of labor in many states; it finds the right job for the right man and helps him out in getting to it. It has some of the biggest business men in the country on its National Council. It fits right on to our LEAGUE work.

THE HUMANITARIANS desire your cooperation by becoming a member. For the world at large the annual dues are two dollars or as much more as you can persuade yourself to pay; for prisoners they are one dollar a year, including the services of the Employment

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Department. Remittance should be made to *Mr. E. C. Landis, Treasurer, Lansing, Kansas.*

Lots more about THE HUMANITARIANS in the last CRITIC—and the next.

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

A DIPLOMA OF FAILURE

"Don't count your chickens before they are hatched" is a good rule, but to stretch it to the point of condemning all eggs as rotten until they are hatched is quite a different matter, especially when you make no effort to hatch them.

That is what most of us do when it comes to other people. We hate like everything to take risks on human nature. And the result? Thousands of men who might have made a success of life go down to utter failure because nobody will trust them.

To speak plainly, there is mighty little credit attaching to those who believe in men and movements which have already succeeded. There is something pathetically ludicrous in the common statement "When you have made yourself or your work a success I shall be ready to help you." It is worse than that—it is cowardly. What marks you as the big type of soul, as a pioneer spirit, is your readiness to believe in the latent possibilities of those who have not yet succeeded, to the extent of giving them a lift. "Cast the bantling on the rocks," said Emerson. Good!—so long as you stand in the background with the wrap and the milk bottle. It is all right for crocodiles to lay their eggs in the sun, but the more advanced forms of life demand a little attention. Nobody turns his children out to sell papers and sleep in a barrel on the notion that if they are good for anything they will succeed unaided; nobody declines to put fertilizer on his fields on the plea that if the crops are worth anything they will grow in spite of obstacles.

Whether it be the prisoner himself or an organization for helping him to his feet, one finds the same foolish tendency. There are people a-plenty who will help the man who has pulled himself out of the mire, but few who will help him out. There are lots of people with reputations and with deep, full pockets who are ready to lend their names and their aid to an association which has proved itself a great success, but few who will help to make it a success.

It may be said of the convict in general that he is a man with a diploma from the school of failure, a diploma which admits him to a post-graduate course in the University of Ruin. The art of dealing with prisoners while in prison or after their release is not

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the art of helping those who have succeeded; it is the far nobler art of aiding the supposed failure. That is why it is so unpopular. Helping the man who is down, then, is not a business for those who demand a certificate of success—it is for those who ask for a diploma of failure.

What is a "repeater?" A repeater is one whose diploma of failure carries the words "Maxima cum Laude." He is the man who has taken the post-graduate course with high honor, the honor of serving more than one term in prison. Consequently we find both the public and the officials loath to do anything for the repeater, or to extend any clemency.

Here we largely delude ourselves. "The repeater," you say, "is a man who has committed more than one offense against the law; he has formed the criminal habit." Not so. The repeater is not the man who has committed more than one offense; it is he who has been caught more than once. There is no sin in getting caught: it may be due to accident, to stupidity or bad judgment. The really shrewd ones are those who offend time and time again and escape detection. And for this we give them credit; when they are caught we call them "first offenders." Many a man "borrows" his employer's money repeatedly and replaces it in time to avoid detection. Does he differ in any moral sense from him who takes it and gets caught? Which is worse, to steal a dozen times and get taken on the twelfth, or to steal twice and get caught each time? I leave that to you, but I emphasize the fact that being a repeater means little unless you know more than is implied in being arrested more than once. We are not yet ready to assume the infallibility of the police and the detectives. True, habit unquestionably counts, but to decide against a repeater because he has been caught more than once is of the same order as judging a man by the clothes he wears; for practical purposes it must be discounted.

When in prison the convict is in charge of the state. As a result the public thinks it need have no interest in him during confinement, that the state will look after him. This is a mistake. How does the state look after him? It feeds and clothes and lodges him, very generally making him work for nothing and leaving his family to starve. It makes it impossible for him to accumulate any funds for a fresh start. Sometimes it gives him an education, sometimes not. But whatever good it may do it does a lot of mischief. No matter how perfect the system may be, no matter how well the men are cared for, the inmate is limited to the company of others of like mind. A fine scheme, isn't it, to promote virtue by giving a man sinners as his only companions! Sensible, isn't it, to place the absolute taboo on his forming the acquaintance of good and intelligent people without the walls, as New York does, by restricting his correspondence other than by benevolent censorship!

It is an admirable theory, advocated by a well known prison

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administrator, that you can fit an inmate for liberty only by training him in the practice of liberty, that you can make him self-governing only by letting him practise self-government. Hence the honor system; hence the Mutual Welfare League.

But these are not enough. If the inmate can be prepared for liberty only by the practice of liberty, so too he can be fitted for association with respectable and high minded people only by practising such association from the start, and that through the only medium open to him—the mails. The notion that he can be prepared for respectable society by shutting him off from it entirely, by squashing his incipient friendships as you would crush a bug, is a huge delusion, none the less absurd by virtue of the authority back of it.

It is the aim of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE to provide the inmate with a "first friend" from the day of his incarceration; it is its aim to inspire him with those ideals, those motives, which influence high minded people, by bringing him into contact with them. It is needless to go into the matter here. Thousands of letters which are received by the LEAGUE testify to its effectiveness.

The LEAGUE work paves the way for further effort, intended to help the prisoner when he becomes free. This is taken up by THE HUMANITARIANS, an association recently founded, which has for its chief object securing employment in advance for the prisoner who is to go out into the world, and thus to spare him the risk of a relapse. The theory of this organization is a novel one and is so wholly in agreement with our ideas that we wish to interest all of our friends in it.

Unlike other prisoners' aid associations, THE HUMANITARIANS proceed on the principle that both outsiders and inmates may become members; in fact, a prisoner must become a member in order to secure its assistance. This may seem a small matter, but it is not. Have you ever noticed the effect of a badge or button on the wearer? Nobody can deny that it is a great one. They mean a confession to the world that you stand for certain things. They are the outward symbols of a principle, of something to be done. In the same way membership in an association carries weight. It places on the member certain responsibilities which must be lived up to and it is a constant reminder of them. Membership in THE HUMANITARIANS—an admirably chosen name—means both to the inmate as well as to the freeman, brotherhood and service. It tends to obliterate the sharp distinction which exists where charity is given and accepted. The man who accepts charity is incurring a debt; nothing is free, not even charity; no man can accept and not give in return without sacrificing self-respect, strength, honor. Those who cannot repay with money can at least repay with loyalty, by passing on to others that which they have received in the form of encouragement and good example.

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That is one reason why THE HUMANITARIANS are standing on the solid rock. To be a member does not mean to take the proffered help and sneak away like a dog with a bone. To be a member of THE HUMANITARIANS means to stand shoulder to shoulder for the common good; it means real brotherhood. You can see how the LEAGUE and THE HUMANITARIANS stand for one thing; the one is for brotherhood towards the man within, for helping him to higher ideals; the other is for brotherhood in helping him over the rough threshold of liberty; the one stands for making good inside, the other for making good outside. No man can be a loyal member of the LEAGUE who does not treat his correspondents with courtesy or who plays the beggar and the importuner, in short, who does not act as a gentleman; and who does not oppose any abuse on the part of other members. THE HUMANITARIANS, in turn, expect every inmate to stand for their principles, to help and give such return as is within his power for help received. Money will be advanced to those who need it, to take them to the place where they are to work, but only on their promise to repay it. This meets the crying need of the discharged prisoner. It removes the obstacle which limits him to finding employment in the immediate vicinity and so multiplies many times his chance of making good, and that without accepting charity.

If you want to help your prison protege, by far the best thing you can do is to endorse his application for membership in THE HUMANITARIANS. If he has no money you cannot do better than advance the needed dollar for membership, which secures the services of the Employment Department—it is the finest sort of insurance againts moral disaster. And if you want to back the movement yourself, you can become a member by paying the annual dues of two dollars. All remittances to be made to *E. C. Landis, Treasurer, Lansing, Kansas.*

And we come around to our initial remarks. Don't wait till the LEAGUE and THE HUMANITARIANS have become so well known as not to need your help. Today is the time to lend a hand. Help us to scratch out the word "failure" and to substitute the word "success" in the diplomas of our prison graduates.

Our Goat

Will the lady who is reported to be sending her prisoner three dollars a week for pin money kindly let us have a few postage stamps to help us towards finding other equally generous individuals? We know of a few prisoners who have other needs than a weekly supply of tobacco and bonbons.

Every Subscription to the CRITIC helps to send a free copy to a prisoner.

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The Roaster Roasted

Editor's note—Whether the writer of the following letter has been drinking we have no means of knowing, but we wish him a lifelong drunk if it continues to affect his checkbook in the same fashion.

Dr. Roastem Stokes,
Fire Eater Apts., Pepperpot Ave.

Dear Sir:—

Feeling that I am not getting my money's worth for the CRITIC, I hereby request the return of my subscription, twenty-five cents. The money is as good for me as for you, and as I am much disappointed in recent issues, I feel that I am entitled to consideration.

Calling upon my memory, I cannot recall an editorial by you for some months, that has been of any consequence. The last one was anent the useless noise question. That was worth a dollar of any man's money (find dollar's worth of check enclosed). Then before that there was a dandy one about the inefficiency of the prayers offered to Deity to stop the war. That was worth at least fifty cents (find the fifty enclosed). Once before that you wrote something so caustic that I was tempted to plagiarize that and that was worth fifty cents (find that fifty enclosed also). But of late you have been getting along the easiest way, and printing stuff written by others in your behalf, that is not much good compared to the stuff you write yourself.

I believe you are crazy, that you are making an attempt to rouse sympathy for a lot of nuts that are in jail because they belong there and who should get it even stronger, and that any one wasting time writing them is a nut also. Perhaps that will get you started. Still you may be right, and I may be wrong, for I *have* made mistakes, and so I will enclose an extra dollar to defray postage for any correspondent who feels that he, she or it wants to write to prisoners, but who finds the burden of postage too great to stagger under. The check I send may be no good, but the bank it's drawn on is a very nice bank. I won't give you my address, but I hope you will recognize the justice of my complaint, and in the next issue you will write down something that will sizzle. If you do that, you need not return the twenty-five cents.

Sincerely,

A. NEURON.

Best Books For Prison Workers

Everybody interested in prison work and problems should read:

Donald Lowrie; My Life in Prison ($1.35).
Thomas Mott Osborne; Within Prison Walls ($1.65).
Winifred Louise Taylor; The Man Behind the Bars ($1.60).
A. P. L. Field; The Story of Canada Blackie ($1.10).

Any of these may be rented or bought from the Library.

Ask for our list of books on prisons and prisoners.

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Taking The Lid Off

I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration for the excellent articles on prison questions appearing in each number of *Our View Point*, the monthly issued by the inmates of the Washington State Penitentiary. What impresses me most is the entire freedom with which these subjects are discussed. There is no evidence of censorship or of the soft soap so obvious in most prison publications. Not only do the articles do great credit to the writer, but they speak volumes for Superintendent Drum, who is clearly a man of mental caliber far above that of most prison officials, in allowing practically free speech. A recent address by Mr. Drum, published in a late number of *Our View Point,* is the best summary of prison reform questions I have seen anywhere, and it represents his own policies. Washington is to be congratulated on its Superintendent. Let us hope that one of his moves will be to remove the restriction which now limits letter writing to one letter a month. Subscription to *Our View Point,* one dollar a year; address, Box 520, Walla Walla, Wash.

A Class In Theosophy

Those of our readers who are interested in Theosophy will be pleased to learn that a class of about thirty has been started in the Washington State Penitentiary, which meets once a week.

We express our readiness to put theosophical members in touch with prisoners here and elsewhere, as well as to provide theosophical correspondents for those inmates desiring them.

Correspondents Wanted

Members who can correspond in German, Italian, Spanish, or any other foreign language.

Members who are willing to write to colored prisoners.

Members who are Bahaists.

Members who are versed in music (vocal or instrumental), in literature, the arts and sciences, law, or, in fact, anything from A to Izzard.

Many recent members have neglected to give us the least information about themselves. While we do not insist on this, it would greatly help us in making proper and satisfactory selections for them. It is not too late to do it now, and the information will be made use of on the next occasion.

Second-Hand Theosophical Books

If you have theosophical or occult books which you do not need, send us names of authors and titles and we will make you an offer. We give good rates for such books when sent in for exchange or credit, and often pay cash outright. No responsibility for books sent without previous agreement.

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How To Help Your Prisoner

Far better than supplying your prison correspondents with knickknacks and eatables is to enroll them as members of THE HUMANITARIANS, entitling them to the services of this association in finding employment. The annual membership for prisoners is one dollar. We will gladly supply you with enrollment blanks, which must be signed by the applicant himself. Checks or money orders should be made payable to *E. C. Landis, Treasurer, The Humanitarians, Lansing, Kansas.* If you want to join yourself, the annual dues are two dollars.

A Caution

Members are cautioned against accepting as truth letters, official or otherwise, which speak of improper correspondence between prisoners and outsiders, and which tacitly assume, but without a spark of proof, that some of our members are concerned. In every case which we have had the opportunity of investigating, and they are numerous, such implication has proved to be false. Our prison membership includes but a small part of the total prison population, while our outside members form an insignificant proportion of the population of the United States, but as we have gotten ourselves into the limelight, everything which goes wrong is laid at our door. We recommend those to whom such reports come to refuse to believe them unless accompanied by incontrovertable proof that some LEAGUE member is actually concerned. It has happened in some cases that prisoners have written to strangers, falsely claiming to be members of the LEAGUE. All legitimate LEAGUE correspondence is preceded by a formal introduction sent out from this office.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used

for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK .....

for .....

$5.00	50 cts.
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$3.00	30 cts.
$2.00	25 cts.
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Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

Theosophy; Occultism; New Thought; Religion; Philosophy

Ramacharaka—Fourteen Lessons in Yogi Philosophy, .65 (new, 1.00).
Advanced Course in Yogi Philosophy, .65 (new, 1.00).
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Mystic Christianity, .65 (new, 1.00).
Ramakrishnananda, Swami—The Universe and Man, .70 (new, 1.08).
Randall, J. Herman—Mind and Body; Rebirth of Religion, Subconscious Mind; each, .25 (new, .60).
Reality of Matter—(Harmonic Series), .60 (new, 1.00).
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Rauschenbusch—Christianity and the Social Crisis, 1.00 (new, 1.65).
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Rice—Practical Graphology, 1.00 (new, 1.50).
Rice, Ervin A.—Why Are We Here? .45 (new, 1.10).
Redding—The Scarlet Book of Free Masonry, 2.00 (new, 3.00).
Remey, Chas. M.—The Bahai Movement, .40 (new, .60).
Rudolph, Hermann—Meditations (theosophical), .70 (new, 1.00).
Rogers, A. K.—Student's History of Philosophy, 1.30 (new, 2.15).
Rogers, L. W.—Hints to Young Students of Occultism, .25 (new, .50)
Ribot, Th.—Psychology of the Emotions, 1.00 (new 1.60).
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De Sales, St. Francis—Spiritual Letters, .50 (new, 1.60).
Savage, J. Minot—Can Telepathy Explain? .60 (new, 1.00).
Schure, Edouard—Krishna and Orpheus; Jesus, the Last Great Initiate. Pythagoras and the Delphic Mysteries, each, .52 (new, .75).
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Scott-Elliott—The Story of Atlantis, 4 maps, .90 (new, 1.25).
Sears, J. S.—Grapho-Psychology, .50 (new, 1.00).
Seashore—Psychology in Daily Life, .95 (new, 1.60).
Segno, Victor—Law of Mentalism, .75 (new, 3.00).
Schofield, Dr. A. T.—The Unconscious Mind, 1.25 (new, 2.15).
Force of Mind or the unconscious Factor in Medicine, 1.00 (new, 2.15).
Sepharial—Manual of Occultism, 1.30 (new, 2.00).
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Severs, Elizabeth—Some Noble Souls (sketches of theosophical worthies). 1.25 (new, 1.75).
Sidis and Goodhart—Multiple Personality, 1.40 (new, 2.15).
Severn, J. Mellott—Popular Phrenology, .25 (new, .50).
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Sinnett, A. P.—The Rationale of Mesmerism, .85 (new, 1.25).
Karma (an occult novel), .25 (new, .50).
In the Next World, .52 (new, .75).
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BY

The O. E. Library League

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAIL RESTRICTION?

Have you ever listened to a Fourth of July oration by your governor, in which he refers to that famous document which is the foundation of our liberty? The Declaration of Independence contains these words:

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Doubtless you have heard the governor quote these words, and quite likely you have heard him explain how, as an ardent advocate of these principles, he deserves another term.

But have you ever heard his Excellency explain that the writers of the Declaration really did not mean what they said, and that when they spoke of "all men," what they really meant was "some men?" Have you ever heard him tell why, if be believes in the Declaration of Independence, he permits flagrant violations of its principles which are quite within his power to remedy? Have you heard him tell why, if life is a God-given, inalienable right, he is willing to sign the death warrant of a prisoner? Has he made it clear to you why, if the right to the pursuit of happiness is God-given and inalienable, he permits certain men, to wit, prisoners, not only to be deprived of liberty—which may be needful just as long as they interfere with the liberty of others—but also of such pursuit of happiness as may be possible under restraint? Have you heard him explain why he allows these men to write not more than one letter a month or a week? Did you ever hear him demonstrate how common sense dictates that when you want to reform a man, to turn his thoughts from vicious into good channels, the best way is to limit him strictly to association with the evil and the vicious? Have you heard him explain how a man is best fitted for decent society by being entirely deprived of it? Have you heard him tell how the best way to make him honest is to throw obstacles in the way of his getting honest employment? And have you learned from him how idleness, lack of purpose, mental rot through lack of in-

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centive to think are remedied by our ridiculous custom of cutting off correspondence with decent people through the mails?

Of course you have not, and the reasons are partly that he does not dare to expose his inconsistency by mentioning these abuses which he tolerates, partly because he does not care a tinker's damn for the Declaration of Independence and the inalienable rights of "all men," but that he wants to persuade you that he is standing for *your* rights in these respects, not for the equally inalienable rights of others.

Knowing the universal tendency to take it out in talk rather than in action, one need not charge these gentlemen with more than inconsistency, but one may well ask whether the time spent in spouting about the rights of man and the glorious stand our forefathers made for them might not better be spent in a little silent meditation on the question "Am I really insisting to the fullest extent of my official authority on the enforcements of these rights for all alike, even if they are in prison and have no votes?"

Suppose that the Government of the United States, or of your own state should place *you* where you could not see your family or friends, business or otherwise, and should deny *you* the privilege of writing more than a single letter a month, or at best a week, to meet all your requirements; suppose it should forbid *you* the right to read the paper in which the work you need is advertised; suppose *you* are seeking mental improvement, to say nothing of innocent amusement, and the state should inflict on *you* all of the disadvantages of a Robinson Crusoe, with none of his advantages; suppose you should need legal advice and that the state should forbid you to consult your lawyer more than so often; imagine that you were not allowed to write to or receive a single word from any source whatever, not even from your wife or child, which is not read by some other party before they or you can see it—then you would be in just about the position of the inmates of our Federal penitentiaries and of the penitentiaries of thirty-five of our states.

Do you know that in these thirty-five states there are six which allow the incarcerated men to write just *one letter a month*—often limited to a single sheet of paper—in response to all of the demands of family, friends and business which even the worst man may properly have and which are essential to his pursuit of the happiness which the state is supposed to protect? Do you know that among them there are six states which prohibit certain classes of inmates from either writing or receiving any letters whatever, and which cut them off as effectually as death from all family ties?

Has it occurred to you that these thirty-five states—backed by their governors—are engaged in the nefarious practice of breaking up family ties, already unfortunately interfered with, and that they are doing this in the name of "Justice?"

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And has it come to your attention that many of these men are without friends and that they so crave friendship of a decent sort that they will treasure a single letter and read it over and over again till it is literally worn out?

But why argue about this matter when you have only to think how *you* would feel under the same circumstances?

"Doubtless," you will say, "there must be a good reason, else such restrictions would not exist." There is an excellent reason, and it is the same reason which in the past has led to burning at the stake, to breaking on the rack, to flaying alive, to the jacket, the thumbscrew, to flogging, to starving on a piece of bread and a gill of water a day, and all of the contrivances by which the man in power has sought to inflict suffering on those in his control. It is the notion that things can be made better by brutality, by revenge, by hitting back. Nobody who knows the history of penology will be deluded by the notion that because a thing exists today, therefore it is right.

There is just one practical reason. All mail entering or leaving a prison has to pass the censor. This is a just rule, provided it is justly and intelligently administered. There must be some check on the writing of indecent letters, on the receipt of dope, weapons and cold chisels. Nobody can object to that. But censorship means work. In the last annual report of a small prison which averages 200 inmates, and which has no restriction on letter writing, the censor reports 25,000 letters a year, incoming and outgoing. When the population rises to 1,600, about the average of the larger prisons, this would mean 200,000 letters a year, or nearly 500 a day, to say nothing of papers and parcels. A pretty considerable job to handle, is it not? No wonder the officials are not enthusiastic and do not look with favor on adding to their burden by unrestricted correspondence. If you had to read 500 letters a day, you might well kick.

But be that as it may, it is up to the state to bear the expense of such censorship as it deems necessary. The state has no right to take a man from free life and the opportunity of getting a living and starve him on the plea that food is too expensive. Neither has it the right to let him go half naked because clothes cost too much. Nobody claims that it has. But is it not equally clear that it has no right to deprive him of mental food or the chance to develop intellectually on the ground that he is too prolific a writer and that censors cost money? The state, if it is true to the Declaration of Independence, owes it to the prisoner that his right to the pursuit of happiness shall be interfered with only to the extent needed to protect society and to reform him—not a hair's breadth more. It is idle to talk of his having forfeited his rights. These rights are given by a Higher Power, not by man. No matter what he has done, to take from him his inalienable right to better

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his condition, to seek happiness, is nothing but robbery. The moment the state locks a man up, that moment it assumes an obligation to him which it is in honor bound to meet, cost what it may. If more censors are needed they must be provided on precisely the same ground that more food must be provided if it is needed.

And of all reforms this is the easiest to effect because it needs no new buildings, no more land, no machinery, no complicated administration, no costly experiments, nothing but the order of the governor.

Who is ultimately responsible for this abuse, this petty tyranny? The rules limiting the number of letters a prisoner may write are not acts of the legislature. They are arbitrary rules, inherited from a past when to be a convict meant to be a slave, a being with no rights whatever. They are kept up by prison officials who are appointed by the governor and who hold their positions subject to his will. It is therefore the governor who is responsible, and in the case of the Federal prisons, the President of the United States. Here is a list of these gentlemen, and when you hear any of them talking about prison reform—and to talk of prison reform is getting to be the fashion—suppose you ask him why, if he is really in earnest, if he really believes in reform. he does not begin with this, which is not only the simplest, but in some respects the most important. If prisoners had a vote, and God only knows why they should not, as well as many men outside who have it, you would see these gentlemen tumbling over each other in their haste to grant unlimited writing privileges.

A Roll of Dishonor

Federal Penitentiaries. The President of the United States; candidate for reelection on a platform containing a prison reform plank. Inmates allowed to write one letter a week.

Colorado. George A. Carlson. Inmates allowed to write five letters a month.

Connecticut. Marcus H. Holcomb. No daily papers are allowed and third grade men have no mail privileges. Others may write once a week.

Delaware. Charles R. Miller. Prisoners are allowed to write one letter a month. Daily newspapers are forbidden.

Idaho. Moses Alexander. Inmates allowed to write four letters a month. Daily papers are forbidden.

Illinois. Edward F. Dunne. Gov. Dunne is a prison reformer and has let down all but the bottom bar in mail restriction.

Indiana. Samuel M. Ralston. Daily papers are forbidden. Men may write once in two weeks.

Iowa. George W. Clarke. Men allowed to write one letter a week. if——

Kansas. Arthur Capper. Men allowed to write once in three weeks. Liberal exceptions seem to be made.

Kentucky. James B. McCreary. Third grade men *not allowed to write letters,* and daily papers are forbidden. This gentleman claims that imprisonment is for reform, not for punishment.

Maryland. Emerson C. Harrington. Inmates allowed to write one letter a month and are forbidden the daily papers.

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Massachusetts. David I. Walsh. Men allowed to write once a month and are forbidden the daily papers.

Michigan. Woodbridge N. Ferris. Men allowed to write three letters a month.

Minnesota. Winfield S. Hammond. Third grade men *not allowed to write or receive letters.* Daily papers are forbidden.

Missouri. Elliott W. Major. Men allowed to write four letters a month.

Montana. Samuel V. Stewart. Men allowed to write one letter a week.

Nebraska. John H. Morehead; prison reformer. Inmates allowed to write four letters a month.

New Hampshire. Rolland H. Spaulding. Third grade men *not allowed to write..* Newspapers are forbidden to all inmates.

New Jersey. James F. Fielder. Inmates allowed to write one letter a month and to receive one a week. Daily papers are forbidden. This is one of the worst prisons in the country in this respect.

New Mexico. William C. McDonald. Inmates may write five letters a month.

North Carolina. Locke Craig. Inmates limited to writing ten letters a month; the most liberal allowance of any of the restricted prisons.

North Dakota. Louis B. Hanna. Inmates limited to writing four letters a month.

Ohio. Frank B. Willis. Men of first grade allowed to write three letters a month; men of fourth grade *forbidden to write or receive letters* or to have papers or magazines of any kind!

Oregon. James Withycombe. Married inmates allowed to write four letters a month; others only one. Oregon claims to have a highly "reformed" penal system.

Pennsylvania. Martin G. Brumbaugh. Inmates allowed to write but one letter a month, and are forbidden the daily papers.

Southern Carolina. Richard I. Manning. Inmates can write and receive but one letter a month and are forbidden newspapers of any kind.

South Dakota. Frank M. Byrne. First and second grade men allowed to write two letters a month; third grade men have *no mail privileges whatever.* Mr. Byrne is an advocate of educating prisoners!

Tennessee. Tom C. Rye. First grade men may write once in two weeks; second grade once a month. Third grade men have *no mail privileges.*

Texas. James E. Furguson. Inmates allowed to write two letters a month.

Utah. William Spry. First grade men write once a week; second grade once a month.

Vermont. Charles W. Gates. Inmates may write one letter a week.

Virginia. Henry C. Stuart. Inmates may write one letter a month and are not allowed newspapers.

Washington. Ernest Lister. Inmates are allowed to write but one letter a month. The management is otherwise liberal and progressive.

West Virginia. Henry D. Hatfield. Allowed to write one or two letters a month according to grade.

Wisconsin. Emanuel L. Philipp. Inmates may write two letters a month and are forbidden daily papers.

Wyoming. John B. Kendrick. Inmates allowed to write three letters a month and are forbidden daily and weekly papers.

The following states claim to place no restriction on prisoners' mail: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island. New York is included in this list, although its brand of unrestricted correspondence is a farce.

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What Has He Done?

Some of our members manifest not a little curiosity to know the charges on which their prison correspondents are confined, and I am sometimes asked for information.

I suggest to such members to imagine how they would themselves feel if places were exchanged and they were approached by a comparative stranger with questions as to their past. Whether the inmate is willing to give this information is largely a matter of personal make-up and of confidence that it will not cause prejudice, but under no circumstances should such personal questions be asked. No one is justified in assuming unsolicited the role of confessor. The past of every prisoner is strictly his own affair apart from that of the court and prison authorities. After all, the past is past and what concerns you and the prisoner is the future. It must be left to him to volunteer such information if he chooses.

The Humanitarians

The work of THE HUMANITARIANS in securing jobs for discharged prisoners is now well under way. Membership for prisoners is one dollar a year, including the services of the Employment Department. Membership for the world at large is two dollars a year. Application blanks can be obtained from the Treasurer, *E. C. Landis, Lansing, Kansas,* or from the *O. E. L. L.*

We suggest to members that one of the best ways of spending money for prisoners is to give them a membership in THE HUMANITARIANS—and to join yourself.

Correspondents For Prisoners—Everywhere

Inmates of prisons anywhere may write to the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE and get a first class correspondent. There are no charges and no testimonials are required; all we expect is that he shall treat his correspondent after the manner of a gentleman. We like to know his age, race or nationality and length of time he is serving and has yet to serve.

Literature Wanted

Readers who have magazines or other literature which they would like to send to prisoners, may send them to *Ernest H. Jones, care of Warden, Conyers, Georgia,* who will see that they are circulated. Georgia does not restrict the receipt of literature by prisoners.

Whatever may be said of the administration of justice in Georgia, in getting unrestricted mail privileges for the prisoners of this state, the "Blind Lady" has gained a point which those centers of civilization, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, have not yet conceded.

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A Question of Color

It is the aim of the LEAGUE to help every inmate quite irrespective of his color. We have members who are willing, or who even prefer, to write to colored prisoners. We must, however, state most emphatically that the fact must be distinctly known, and we must warn every colored inmate who applies for a correspondent without stating the fact, that he will be abruptly cut off the moment the evasion is discovered, as it almost invariably is.

All inside members are urged to see that no misunderstandings on this point arise.

Membership in The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired.

Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

Universal Exchange League

Readers of the CRITIC are invited to communicate with *Charles A. Seifert, Harrisburg, Pa.*, Secretary of the U. E. L., an all-round exchange having as its objects Diversion, Pleasure, Mutual Benefit, Universal Brotherhood. Mention the CRITIC, state what subject you are interested in, and send ten cents for registration.

The Square Deal

I am informed that previous to the time when the HUMANITARIANS shall have their own organ, this function will be filled by THE SQUARE DEAL, the weekly of the Kansas State Penitentiary, under the able editorship of "Tex." The CRITIC will continue to back up the HUMANITARIANS in an unofficial manner.

Some Recent Additions

Jinarajadasa, C.—Theosophy and Modern Thought; $0.75. A discussion of some modern scientific theories as bearing on Theosophy.

Besant, Annie—Theosophy and Life's Deeper Problems; $0.50. Being the four Convention Lectures of 1915—God; Man; Right and Wrong; Brotherhood. This is Mrs. Besant's latest theosophical book and is highly suggestive.

Clymer, Dr. R. Swinburne—The Son of God; reprint, $0.25.

Rubber Stamps. One of our members, *Mr. H. D. Wilson, Box 8, Phoenix, Arizona,* offers to make rubber stamps for LEAGUE members at 35 per cent off the regular price. Give him a trial.

Registered LEAGUE membership number, Sept. 13, 5,275.

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Theosophy; Occultism; New Thought; Religion; Philosophy

Spinney, Wm. A.—Health through Self-Control, 1.00 (new, 1.60).
Stanhope, Dr. L. E.—Mental Healing, .30 (new, 1.00).
Stanton, Edward—Dreams of the Dead, .65 (new, 1.00).
Stead, Wm. T.—After Death, or Letters from Julia (out of print), 1.00.
St. Vincent, Count—Militia Crucifera Evangelica (Rosicrucian), 1.00 (new, 1.50).
Steiner, Rudolph—Theosophy, .70 (new, 1.00).
Sterns—Osru (reincarnation story), .40 (new, .75).
Stocker, R. D.—Healing, Telepathy, Clairvoyance, each, .30 (new, .50).
Street—Hidden Way Across the Threshold (cover damaged), 1.75 (new, 3.50).
Sturdy—Trans. of Narada Sutra, with comments, .25 (new, .35).
Thomas, Aug.—The Witching Hour (psychic fiction), 1.00 (new, 1.60).
Thorndyke, E. L.—Educational Psychology, 1.00 (new, 1.60).
Thomson, Wm. Hanna—Life, Death and Immortality, .65 (new, 1.10).
What is Physical Life? .70 (new, 1.30).
Thompson—Proofs of Life after Death, .95 (new, 1.60).
Tolstoi—My Confession; My Religion; The Gospel in Brief, 1.00 (new, 1.60).
Towne, Elizabeth—Joy Philosophy; The Life Power and How to Use It; Practical Methods for Self-Development, each, .70 (new, 1.08).
Lessons in Living, .65 (new, 1.08).
Experiences in Self-Healing; You and Your Forces; How to Grow Success, each, .25 (new, .50).
Towne, William—Health and Wealth from Within, .60 (new, 1.08).
Trine, Ralph Waldo—What All the World's A'Seeking, .65 (new, 1.30).
This Mystical Life of Ours, .65 (new, 1.00).
In the Fire of the Heart, .65 (new, 1.10).
Turnbull, Coulson—Divine Language of Celestial Correspondences, 2.00 (new, 3.00).
Tucker—Personal Power (to college men), .70 (new, 1.60).
Valentine, Basil—Triumphant Chariot of Antimony, 1.00 (new, 1.50).
Vivekananda, Swami—My Master, .30 (new, .55).
Voices from the Open Door (spiritualist), .55 (new, 1.00).
Walker, E. D.—Reincarnation; a Study of Forgotten Truth, .70 (new, 1.00).
Ward, Edith—Light from the East, .30 (new, .50).
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BY

The O. E. Library League

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DEBTS

Human finance is a complicated subject, but it all comes down to this—obligations must be met at the risk of bankruptcy. Moral finance is just the same; you must pay back what you have received or become spiritually bankrupt. There is no essential difference between a material and a moral debt.

One of the greatest delusions, and one which lies at the root of most of our troubles, is the notion that it is possible to receive and enjoy something without incurring the obligation of paying it back, and that even if such an obligation is incurred, it may be evaded. In a gross form this delusion fills our prisons; in a somewhat more refined form it fills our churches. We now laugh at the old custom of putting a man in prison because he owes a bill, but it still seems perfectly logical to believe in the doctrine of eternal punishment, to think that the Great Creditor, God, throws his debtors into hell, instead of giving them a chance to pay up. We would laugh at the offender who should ask the court to acquit him because he is sorry for his offense, but we in turn approach the Almighty with precisely the same plea.

There are many who accept the principle, sometimes known as the Law of Karma, that as one sows, so shall he also reap. But even the most ardent adherents of this principle seldom perceive the full extent of the law, and see that in the Universe absolutely nothing is given away. I regard it as a fundamental principle of ethics not only that obligations should be met, but that they cannot be escaped in any manner whatever and that the law that debts must be paid and always are paid, willy-nilly, is as far-reaching as the law of the conservation of energy. What one does not pay willingly is taken from him in the form of spiritual degradation, of loss of strength, loss of manhood.

We speak of God giving. God never gives—God lends. There is not a bank in the world more strict in its accounts than the Great Bank of the Universe; no Shylock was ever more insistent on his pound of flesh. It works on strictly business principles, and the first rule is that whatever you get from it must be passed on; you can keep

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none of it. The Divine Mercy often arranges easy terms, but ultimately you must pay; no receipts in full are given away.

When we come into the world we are provided with a certain working capital; we receive a physical body and a mind capable of development; we are born into an environment more or less adapted to our development; we also receive the use of the agents of nature, the air, the sunlight. Sometimes we inherit wealth which we have done nothing to accumulate.

We are in the habit of looking on these things as "gifts." They are not gifts—they are loans. They are no more gifts than the money or tools loaned to a man to enable him to start in business.

"We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out," says the burial service. A half truth only. We can carry out with us all that really belongs to us, the experience, the moral and spiritual advancement we have scored—these are our property, the profit on our loan.

The thing works the other way likewise. The Bank of the Universe insists that you pay your debts, but when you make a deposit it is equally scrupulous in paying it back; no gifts are accepted; whatever you do in the way of self-sacrifice is treated strictly as a loan and is returned to you at full value. You need have no fear on that score.

"But salvation is free, isn't it?" No, it is emphatically not free. Salvation is just this—paying off your obligations. To try to get salvation without paying for it is to attempt to pass a forged check on the Bank of Heaven. It won't work. You imagine a heaven filled with those who have accepted the Divine Sacrifice. Don't forget that sacrifice, like charity, begins at home, with yourself. Heaven is filled with those who have paid their debts, not with those who have had them paid for them. If you want to know something about the currency of heaven, read the story of the Widow's Mite; that is an excellent example of such currency.

Why does God never give? You know that ill judged charity is degrading and pauperizing in its effects, that it leads to loss of self-respect, independence and manhood. Can you not see that just as the recipient is degraded by gifts which he never repays and never intends to, so the recipient of the Divine gifts would also be degraded, did he not repay them? God has no intention of pauperizing his children. The greatest manifestation of the Divine Love lies in this, that it looks towards cultivating manhood, which is a lower form of divinity. This is impossible if you come as a beggar, or with the plea that you have obligations which you propose to shirk if you can.

We talk of the forgiveness of sins. There is no such thing as the forgiveness of sins except in the form of a receipt for a debt actually discharged. Sin is some form of debt which has been incurred to the Universal; it is an obligation owing somewhere. It

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has to be paid off to the uttermost farthing. The doctrine of the forgiveness of sins as commonly understood is one of the most pernicious heresies ever invented. It is doubtless most soothing and comforting to think that you can sin and be forgiven, but it means just this, that you can steal and persuade the court to acquit you.

Is there any virtue in repentance? Surely. Repentance, properly understood, does not mean just being sorry. It means an honest recognition of your obligation combined with the resolution to meet it at all costs. Repentance wipes out nothing. What do you think of him who wants to be let off, not because he cares whether he owes a debt, but because he doesn't want the trouble of paying? That is just the attitude of those who think they can have their sins forgiven if they will but admit them and get someone to shoulder them for them. You go to church and what do you hear? You hear the advice to repent and believe that your bill has been paid and someone will pay it for you. We often hear it said that Christianity has proved to be a failure. Any religion which proposes a way of escaping one's obligations is bound to be a failure, just as would be the doctrine that you can take your neighbor's goods and make no further restitution than an apology. It is bound to be a failure because it runs counter to a fundamental law of the Universe. Christianity has been a failure just as far as people have transformed it into a plan for shirking. The real Christianity is the doctrine of attaining Godhood through Manhood, and Manhood involves meeting one's obligations to the last penny. It has not been tried out.

We often hear it said that the way to hell is paved with good intentions, and like many another proverb its meaning is misunderstood. It is the good we intend to do sometime, when it is convenient, but which we make no effort to do now, it is the putting off till tomorrow what we might do today, that affords the paving material for the broad highway. The deeds we do with good intentions, no matter how blunderingly, no matter what the actual result, these count as a paying of our debt. There can be no doubt that such good intentions often work mischief, but so far as the doer is concerned, there can be but one result.

There is a very prevalent notion that a debt can be paid by suffering. Have you not seen those who are passing more or less illnaturedly through privation or tribulation and who think that when they have suffered just the amount of pain they have inflicted on others their account will be balanced, their karmic debt paid? Pain is doubtless often incidental on ill-doing, and it is likewise at times a result of well-doing, but there is absolutely no connection between pain and meeting one's obligations. A forced payment is no payment at all, so far as the moral debtor is concerned. The principle of an eye for an eye is not a part of the Divine

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order; no amount of destruction can counterbalance destruction. Nothing can convince me that the divine Beneficence is willing to let you off an obligation, or, on the other hand, that it demands that you suffer just to the extent that you have caused suffering.

No, there is but one way in which a debt can be paid, and that is by constructive action. I may or may not suffer, according to circumstances. If I take a life, the state claims the right to take my life in return. What good is done? That life represented a certain value to its possessor, to his dependents, to the community. There is but one way in which I can square matters. I must assume that man's responsibilities. If he had a family, I must support it; if he had debts, I must pay them; if he owed, as all do, service to the community, I must assume that likewise. You may, if you wish, call that constructive punishment. Whether I suffer or not in the process is a secondary consideration. Follow this principle out. You may not be able to repay your debts in like kind, or to the same individuals, but you must and can pay somewhere. The net result must be that the world is no worse off than it would have been; then your debt is so far paid. If you are wise you will not talk about the payment of your karmic debts by suffering; you will see that nothing but constructive action can pay.

Let us consider for a moment the application of this principle in penology. A convict is in general one who has appropriated that belonging to others, or who has committeed some act of violence, of destruction or injury. Keeping him in prison can have but two objects. One is to prevent further depredations; the other is to put him in a better position to pay the debt he has incurred. Just sitting in prison and suffering deprivation of liberty and the discomforts incidental to prison life pays nothing whatever; no debt to society is paid by staying in prison, no matter how long it may be. He who leaves prison with hatred and revenge in his heart, with the determination to get even, has paid no debt to society; he has simply set his face towards increasing it. He has not even paid it when he has formed good resolutions as to what he will do when free. His work of discharging his obligations begins when he gets free.

There is this curious feature about the discharge of moral debts. A forced payment leaves the debtor in the same condition as before; it is only those acts which are free and voluntary which leave him with a credit. In other words, self-sacrifice, the doing that which you are not forced to do, this alone moves you upward on the ladder of evolution. The way to salvation lies in voluntarily meeting your obligations, not in being forced to do so. For this reason social betterments supported by forced payment sf taxes, however desirable, can never take the place of individual voluntary effort. The ills under which the world is groaning, these constitute a sort of syndicated debt which it is part of your individual

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duty to help pay off. You cannot repay your debts to God directly, however much you may thank and praise Him for your advantages. What is expected of you is to make your payment into the sinking fund—that is the way in which your debt to heaven is discharged.

It may be said that this discussion is academic and has no practical value, no relation to the world as it is. Yet I think that if you will look about you you will see that a very large part of the evil in the world is directly due to disregarding it, to assuming that one is justified in taking all that comes his way without incurring the obligation to pass it on. What do you yourself think of the man—the other fellow, for you are likely to make an exception in your own case—who continually receives and never gives out? No matter what your own actions may be you do not look on such with favor. What do you think of him who spends his wealth in the gratification of his senses, or let us say, his lusts, while his tenants are living in insanitary dwellings and dying of tuberculosis? What do you think of him who shuts his eyes to the fact that his agent is renting his property for saloons and brothels, while he turns over a small fraction of the proceeds, which he does not need and could not spend on himself, for the support of a church where he can listen to the doctrine that salvation is free? What do you think of yourself when you talk of sweatshops, and then purchase their products at the lowest possible price, congratulating yourself on your "bargains," while you make no effort to restore what you have "saved" to those who should have had it? I am far from thinking that all the ills of the world can be remedied by moral means; I do not doubt that a community of saints would suffer just as much as the sinners from plague, pestilence and famine. Knowledge and intelligence can never be replaced by saintliness, but equally, saintliness can never be replaced by intelligence and knowledge. In our search for a remedy for human ills we of this materialistic age have deified knowledge and efficiency to the exclusion of everything else. You may say it is impossible to change human nature, that man is essentially a self-seeking being and that the best you can do is to teach him to get all he can for himself while avoiding treading on the toes of others, and that the only possible system is one in which the evils are balanced against each other. But what effort is made in our schools to teach anything else? What school is there which teaches anything more than the rule of getting all you can for yourself provided you do it "honestly?" What school or church is there which teaches anything but the doctrine that you can sin and be forgiven without making full restitution? Until the effort is seriously made to do this, it is idle to say that it is impossible. Those who maintain that in the knowledge of the doctrine of Karma is to be found a remedy for all ills doubtless go too far, but they are right in assuming that there can be no essential reform until this doctrine is generally appreciated. To know the law is the first step in obeying it.

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What Can I Do?

It is not every one who knows where to take hold. It is often said that one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives. Limited to their comfortable homes and moving in a restricted circle of society, many who would really like to lend a hand do not know where to begin.

If any such will write to the Editor of the CRITIC, they will be promptly shown how to make a beginning. They will be put in touch with the submerged half without the necessity of leaving their homes, or of devoting more than a small part of the time which they otherwise seek to "kill." We will guarantee that if they are really in earnest they will not let go until their ideas of the submerged half have undergone a radical change, and until the question will be, not "What can I do?" but "Why have I waited so long to begin?"

An Earnest Appeal To Members

Owing to the present urgent need of more correspondents for prisoners, members who have ceased to correspond with any of the prisoners assigned to them, or who are able to take on one or two more, are earnestly requested to report to us immediately. They are also invited to interest as many of their friends as possible in the work of the LEAGUE.

Membership In The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired.

Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

Obey That Impulse—Why Hesitate?

THE HUMANITARIANS have disbarred all the objectionable features, assumed all the work, taken over all the responsibility and eliminated the charity and publicity. It is an organization to help you to help others. Your cooperating may be the strategic move that will win some man the battle for his honor and future happiness, or mayhap his life, so why hesitate?

Obey that impulse! Better do it right now before you forget it. Do what? Fill out the Select Membership Blank on another page and mail with fee to *Mr. E. C. Landis, Treasurer, The Humanitarians, Lansing, Kansas.*

Every subscription to the CRITIC helps to send it free to a prisoner.

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The Humanitarians

(A National Association; Incorporated. Executive Offices, Lansing, Kansas)

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Director of Publicity

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

Possibly not! But if your father, son or brother were behind steel bars you would be interested in his welfare, wouldn't you? Undoubtedly! Isn't Society beginning to realize that the penal system is a failure? Why? Because we have placed a premium upon crime. We have turned down our thumbs and doomed the youth of the land to a life without the pale. Branded with the mark of Cain could you expect anything short of a reversion to crime by the released prisoner?

A new order of things has been born.

Today business men are asking not "Who Are You?" but "What Can You Do?"

The ex-prisoner who can do a grown man's work will receive a grown man's pay. He will be given a fighting chance and that is all any red-blooded man wants or would accept.

THE HUMANITARIANS have a list of some two hundred and fifty firms in every branch of industry who stand ready to employ released prisoners. They will find the man a position befitting his qualifications and send him to it. They will be his friend when he most needs a friend.

Isn't the work worth while. Won't you do your part to make it a success? Can't you see the value of it to Society at large? Look at the economic waste made possible by the old method. Strong men scrapped like broken machines because of some small flaw which sent them to prison. Then think of their families who in the end suffer most. What becomes of them if you doom their breadwinners to a life of crime because of a single mistake?

Would you join us in the work of rebuilding wrecked lives? Candidly, isn't the project worthy of your serious consideration?

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!

We need you coooperation! We want you with us in the fight! We'd like to have you send in your application for membership today.

Will you do it?

What It Is

THE HUMANITARIANS is a national organization of business men and women interested in the future welfare of the released

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prisoner. The association is incorporated under the laws of the State of Kansas. It aims to furnish employment and whatever moral or monetary assistance that may be needed to insure a fair start for the men facing life after having undergone the rigors of penal servitude. It will likewise endeavor to render assistance to the indigent families of the "Grey Brotherhood" when circumstances make it imperative.

Why It Is

Society has too long frowned down the efforts of those discharged from behind stone walls who endeavor to regain the places they once held in the social scheme. The organization proposes to eradicate as far as possible the intolerant attitude of the unthinking masses and to create a more wholesome atmosphere towards the men who would beat back.

The Means to the End

That this can best be done through honest employment under decent working conditions is universally recognized by those closely associated with prisons and prisoners.

The Association proposes to find employment for prisoners about to be released, insure their reaching that employment, and to stand as their friends in the face of prejudice and persecution.

To Prisoners—Everywhere

Mr. Man-Who-Wants-A-Chance,
In Prison Anywhere:

Here's What You Have Been Waiting For!

It is a real live-wire, non-charity organization of red-blooded men, inside and out of prison, whose chief object is to better the conditions of the fellow leaving the four walls behind him.

Honesty isn't the best policy. It is the only policy. Take an inventory of your net earnings and balance it against the losses. You will find that you are in the red. So am I, and every man who has followed the crooked trail.

Beating back is a grown man's job. It takes determination and nerve. If you have those qualities; if you are tired of the crooked game; if you want to look the world square in the eye and fight for rehabilitation; if you seriously believe that respectability has notoriety skinned a block; if you want to be on the level with Society and with yourself, then, my friend, THE HUMANITARIANS need you.

If you are a weak-kneed, wishy-washy afraid of work sort of somebody; if you had rather go on living the life of a caged or hunted beast instead of having a decent home and a steady job; if you are a quitter, a double-crosser or an habitual knocker—we don't need you, and you don't need us.

It is the steady dependable chap, who has learned his lesson;

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the fellow who is ninety per cent MAN, the sort who says "I can" and does it—they are the men we want and we want them bad.

Past records? Forget them! It is the future which counts. What are you going to be? What are you going to do? Are you willing to fight the good fight and not give up when things go hard?

If you are a clean-cut, cold-from-the-shoulder scrapper; if you are determined to go straight and stay straight; if you have the snap and vim which does things, then Friend O'Mine shoot us the application and a Dollar. Sure, a Dollar!

Your Dollar won't run the organization, to be sure, but it will help. You will get 100 per cent for your investment. Nothing is free in this world except salvation. It takes money to make the wheels go round. Most of the money will come from outside members, but you can help a little. We want to get away from the charity basis.

In return for your dollar you will be insured work at living wages the day you leave prison. If you haven't transportation we will see that you get to your destination. We will place you with a firm that will protect you just as long as you protect yourself.

The necessary money we will advance upon your personal note. If you pay it back you will be helping the fellows you left behind you, who also want a chance. If you are the sort of a chap we take you to be, you won't betray your friends, and we want to be the best friends you ever had.

It's up to you. You know what you intend to do. If you're going crooked the day the doors swing open, be square enough to pass us up. Don't hurt the other fellow by playing the sneak.

Prisoners started this movement. We think we know the men inside better than the criminologists and psychologists. We believe that given a man's job and an even break, 90 per cent of our members will stand the acid test. We have the unqualified support of many of the biggest men in America. You can help us—or hurt us. We are putting it up to you as an individual, to play the game according to the rules, if you decide to join us.

Think it over. If you decide that THE HUMANITARIANS is an 18 carat proposition send in your application. If you think it unworthy of your support—keep your Dollar. Here's hoping you decide to KICK IN.

Fraternally yours,

H. A. SCHAPPER,
Director of Publicity.

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Lansing, Kansas

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

COUNTERFEIT MONEY AND COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.
And the scribes and pharisees murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.

—*Luke; xv, 1, 2*

The editor of a leading religious paper, *The Journal and Messenger,* takes a social worker to task because she has interested herself in a young artist, serving a term in the Leavenworth Penitentiary for counterfeiting, who has decorated the prison chapel with a mural painting representing Christ sitting at table with two convicts, and which bears the legend "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." "It is worth while to note," says this modern scribe, referring to the men whom Christ chose as his dinner companions, "that these sinners were rich men, tax collectors, who had made their money in ways approved by the government but disapproved by the people. It happens that they were not counterfeiters or the ordinary class of criminals found in the penitentiary." "The teaching of this picture," continues our Pharisaical colleague, "is decidedly immoral, because it strikes at the foundation of all morality, implying that there is no difference between the criminal and the honest man. We hope that this social settlement worker may not be able to secure the release of this counterfeiter for teaching bad morals in a picture."

Which is the greater sin, to counterfeit money, or to counterfeit the religion of Christ and to pass it off as the genuine article? Which is worse, to cheat a few people of their dollars by means of spurious notes, or to edit a religious paper, supposedly devoted to teaching the gospel of Christ, and to call immoral a picture portraying Christ as the companion of sinners? What is to be thought when the mouthpiece of one of the largest orthodox religious denominations objects to presenting to penitentiary inmates, as immoral, a picture of Christ as the friend of sinners and holds him up as a type of the modern religious snob who draws the line at sitting down to eat with a thief—unless he be a rich one?

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For what were these tax collectors whom the editor of *The Journal and Messenger* exalts above the "common criminal" and attempts to persuade us that Christ did also? Anybody who knows history knows that these gentleman sinners gained their wealth through being authorized by a corrupt and tyrannical government to squeeze all they could out of the poor, on condition that a certain amount should be paid over to the state; in short, they were practically nothing but licensed highwaymen. We know something even in these days of public officials who get their rake-off, who guarantee a fairly "efficient" administration provided they can make their fortunes out of it. All of these things can be designated by but one word—stealing. Where is the difference? Is it any worse to take what does not belong to one by passing counterfeit money than to take it by getting carte blanche from the government to squeeze the poor and to devour widows' houses?

The Christianity which this editor teaches is not the religion of Christ; it is Tammanyism disguised as religion. The moral of his teaching is this—Christ was willing to extend social recognition to the rich tax collector, to the men who robbed the people by legalized methods, but it was beneath him to associate with the poor sinner who used such methods as were within his reach. The real sin is not in being a robber, but in being a poor robber and in neglecting to get the approval of "the government," whatever that may be. If our penitentiary friend had said "This man receiveth *rich* sinners and eateth with them," that would have been quite proper and moral, but to omit the word *rich* and to speak of sinners without qualification, that is immoral.

It may be true, as the editor adds, that "ability to paint a picture has nothing more to do with morality than ability to shoe a horse." It is now equally evident that ability to run a religious paper has as little to do with an understanding of Christ. But the case of this editor is much worse. It is just such sentiments as these that have brought religion into contempt and have caused it to be branded as a failure. The really serious aspect of the editorial is not so much in its condemnation of an individual convict of whose case the writer clearly knows nothing, but it lies in this, that the organ of one of the leading religious denominations dares to present such stuff to its readers as gospel. It indicates the extent to which our religious teachers and teachings have become infected with Pharisaical dry rot. Our preachers, with some honorable exceptions, care more for telling people what they like to believe than what Christ taught by his precepts and his example. It is doubtless agreeable, if you are rich, to think that wealth can blot out a multitude of sins, and to maintain that Christ would draw a line between rich and poor sinners is to make Christianity a rich man's religion. Today the man who has the courage to stand in the pulpit and enlarge on the statement that it is easier for a camel to pass through

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the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven would stand a good chance of losing his job, and equally the religious editor would hazard the loss of his subscribers. What wonder is it that a religion which makes wealth the basis for divine recognition and toleration and which implies that the size of one's bank account will be taken into consideration in making up the celestial elite list has lost its grip on the heart of the average man?

As for the editor's condemnation of the convict in question, of whom he knows nothing except that he is in prison and a counterfeiter, it would be superfluous to allude to the command to "judge not, that ye be not judged." It is quite sufficient to state that he has since been liberated by order of the President of the United States after a sufficient examination of his case. Possibly the editor is right and the President wrong, but in any event we recommend for the editor's consideration the text "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone."

Killing On Suspicion

New York State has again distinguished itself by doing to death a man of whose guilt there was a reasonable doubt. By this I mean a doubt in the mind of a reasonable man who was in a position to know something of the case. The reasonable man in this instance was Warden Osborne of Sing Sing, who publicly asserted that "there is not a doubt in the world that the man is innocent." At his suggestion the Governor was called up by some prominent citizens, but his private secretary declined to wake him, and so, before the Governor was up in the morning the man was dead. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown" clearly does not apply to the Governor of New York.

There really seems to be no sense of responsibility in this matter of killing people on suspicion. The prosecuting attorney, a man hired to secure conviction if he can, shifts it on the jury, the jury passes it to the judge and the judge tosses it to the governor, who, in the present case, hands it over to his private secretary and sleeps on in peace.

I am not talking about killing a man legally when the evidence is incontrovertible that he has committed a murder. That is bad enough. But it is high time that some check was being placed on the depredations of our courts in their disregard for human life. Whatever may be said of convictions based on circumstantial evidence, and doubtless in ordinary criminal cases a decision must often be founded on probability, they should always have a string attached to them. The man who is sent to prison can be released if new evidence turns up, but there is no possibility of putting life into a dead body, and no death sentence should be allowed in the absence of absolutely indisputable evidence, and plenty of it; it is no place for taking chances. Have you ever noticed how a flock of

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blackbirds will follow one member who darts off in a particular direction? They are all influenced by the same motive at the same moment, just because they are all cast in the same mold. Men are much the same; juries are influenced by the same spirit that influences a mob which hangs a man. Twelve men in a jury box being harrangued by a prosecuting attorney differ in no essential way from a mob of men addressed by a speaker on a soap box. They are swayed by eloquence, they lose their balance and like the mob they are ready to become parties to legal lynching.

That twelve men can be got to agree under the hypnotic influence of a prosecuting attorney whose career depends on his winning his cases means little more than that twelve stones will fall to the ground under the influence of gravitation as surely as one. Nobody's life is safe under a system where certainty is replaced by probability. If you are known to have a grudge against a man and have been seen quarrelling with him, and he is found murdered, you are pretty sure to be arrested on suspicion, and then, with a prosecuting attorney determined to hang someone and a jury of twelve blackbirds in a box, your fate is tolerably certain, especially if you are one of the poor devils not possessed of that mysterious something known as "social standing."

Say what you will about the intelligence of the average man and of the charge of the judge to the jury that they must give the accused the benefit of every possible doubt, the fact remains that jurymen, like others, are likely to mistake probability for certainty and to proceed on the theory that a good case is a sure case. As soon as we pass the fifty percent line most of us are in the region of certainty. And so the fate of a human being becomes a mere matter of voting. When twelve men see seven chances for guilt and but three against it, they all vote the same way and the man is done away with. It is the grain weight more or less that sinks the balance of decision on the right side or the left.

Consider yourself, intelligent reader. You know that you yourself, in the affairs of your daily life, come to a decision before the evidence is all in. At a certain point far removed from certainty you make up your mind—you have jumped off the fence on one side or the other and it is too much trouble to jump over again. Up to that point you concern yourself with the question whether the argument shall be accepted; beyond that point you take the opposite course and look for reasons why it shall *not* be accepted. An eminent criminologist has stated that he could usually tell by looking at him the moment a juryman has made up his mind; after that all talk is practically useless. In nearly every case which presents itself to us, let us say the merits of opposing presidential candidates, we make up our minds early in the game and close our ears to what follows. And so presumption becomes absolute conviction.

What is the remedy? You cannot change human nature; no

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law can make a juryman other than he is. No law which places the life of any man in the hands of his fellow mortals can be a safe law. There is but one remedy; the right to kill legally must receive the absolute veto of the community. Capital punishment must be abolished.

It is a difficult matter; most of us are still savages. About a year ago a majority of the people of Arizona deliberately voted in favor of capital punishment. Probably a vote in New York would bring the same result. Nothing but ceaseless agitation, ceaseless effort to educate the public can effect a reform. Of late times it has been the custom for churches to take up some public question on a certain Sunday. Who is there who will agitate for an anti-capital punishment Sunday? Publication in popular form of a series of cases where evidence of guilt has been "incontrovertible" and the man hanged, and in which the real murderer has turned up later, would be of value. It would make a lot of fine newspaper stories.

More Publicity Needed

At the present time we are getting about eight requests from prisoners to one new correspondent. The ratio should be about three to one.

Members are urgently requested to make some serious effort to interest their friends. Especially they are urged to write to their newspapers. Most of our best workers have come to us through the medium of a notice casually read in a newspaper. It is a mistake to suppose that those who come in this way are less competent than others. Our experience is decidedly to the contrary.

Members who have ceased to correspond with prisoners assigned to them should inform us, so that others may be given in their place. The majority who undertake this work find it highly satisfactory, but it is in the nature of things that there must be exceptions. Those who have been disappointed should not give up, but try again; the probability is that a second trial will give better results.

Colored Prisoners Want Literature

There are about forty colored prisoners in the Washington State Penitentiary who are very desirous of receiving general and periodical literature, especially books, magazines and papers published in the interest of the colored race. It is stated that their appeal to some of the colored societies in the West has met with no response. Those of our readers who can send literature for these men may address it to *Harry Lewis, Reg. No. 7872, Box 520, Walla Walla, Wash.,* who will see that it is distributed.

Keep this address on file.

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Notes For Prisoners

We wish to state that promptness in assigning correspondents depends entirely on the number of correspondents available. Delays are not due to carelessness in this office but to lack of volunteers. Nobody who asks for enrollment will be overlooked, provided it appears that their motives are proper ones and within the scope of the LEAGUE's work. It sometimes happens that we do not receive the applications and we have no objection to a reminder, but to write impatient letters will not bring forth one new volunteer, and the receipt of them is discouraging to the editor, who has his hands full of worries already.

While we try to take up prisoners' applications in the order received, as far as possible, it is unavoidable that preference shall be given to those who write personal letters, for the reason that most new correspondents demand more information as a starter than that implied in signing one's name on a yellow slip.

Inmates who join the LEAGUE with the idea of getting soul mates or of drawing on their correspondent's bank account might just as well spare themselves the trouble of writing, as they will be dropped the moment their object is discovered. We encourage correspondence with sensible women, where it is permitted, but it must be emphatically stated that no nonsense will be tolerated. Dunning correspondents for financial assistance, especially to buy luxuries, is entirely out of order. We do not object to an inmate stating his needs for educational purposes, but he must be prepared to back them up with an endorsement from the chaplain, teacher or other official. Inmates should remember that many of our correspondents are themselves poor, that they have other demands upon them and that the state does not pay their board and lodging.

Prison members are urged to use their influence to prevent abuses of correspondence, and not to encourage those whose motives are obviously mercenary or frivolous. A very little abuse goes a long way in causing antagonism among the authorities, while a more cheerful demeanor, and evidence of greater sincerity and of good resolutions are the best testimonial that the LEAGUE is actually accomplishing its objects.

The LEAGUE does not offer to find employment for inmates, but will be glad to put them in touch with the HUMANITARIANS, and to send them application blanks for membership.

New Book Lists

Readers interested in Theosophical literature are notified that our new and fully revised Theosophical List No. 2 is now ready and will be sent on application. This is the most complete list published in America of Theosophical literature.

Those interested in prisons, criminals and delinquents can obtain our revised list of such books on request.

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Letter From A Prison Chaplain

Dr. H. N. Stokes Maine State Prison, August 30th, 1916

Dear Sir:—

I cannot refrain from writing a line of commendation on two articles in the CRITIC of August 23, "Request to Prisoners" and "Some Plain Talk to Members."

I have for some time felt the need that just such things be said in this open way. I have from the first felt that the LEAGUE was capable of doing great good. But in this institution, as I have watched the workings of it, I have been dubious as to the average between good and harm.

I fear that it is a fair criticism of the situation to say that a large percentage of the men here who join that organization do so with the expectation of receiving gifts from their correspondents. This is not true of all by any means, but I agree with you exactly in this that the indiscriminate sending of presents and money to the men has a harmful tendency, exactly as it would have to hand out money to any person on the street who asked for it, without looking into the merits of the case.

The cases you mentioned in that article sound very familiar, although they did not occur here, but there have been cases here so like them that it is easy to see that other prisons are meeting the same problems we have here.

Thanking you for the articles referred to and trusting that they may do good, I remain,

Yours,

THE CHAPLAIN.

THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

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[List No. 2] Theosophy

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Vol. VI **Wednesday, November 1, 1916** **No. 6**

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TOO MUCH CARTER

Those of our friends who have had some experience with the methods and ideas of the Superintendent of Prisons of the State of New York will be interested in the reasons for the resignation of Thomas Mott Osborne as Warden of Sing Sing. These reasons may be briefly summed up in the words "Too Much Carter." The following quotations will be illuminating:

"You will agree that exceptions can not be made in official rulings."—*From a letter of Mr. Carter to several* LEAGUE *members.*

The following is from the *Bulletin of the Mutual Welfare League* of October 9th:

"Superintendent Carter's order follows:

"'While it is not the intention of the superintendent to interfere with the experiment which you are testing at your institution, in view of my recent order as regards escapes I have decided that hereafter the privileges of convicts known as 'lifers,' and those having long terms to serve must be confined inside the walls of the institution, this order to take effect at once.'"

"It was stated at the prison department that while this order referred directly to Sing Sing Prison, its application was made general, the superintendent's decision having been directed to all agents and wardens, and no exceptions will be allowed."

The following is a part of Mr. Osborne's letter of resignation, addressed to the Superintendent of Prisons:

"Your recent orders, issued to the press before they even reached the Warden—thus giving no time to object, to correct, or to modify—are such as to make good administration in any institution impossible. They aim to discredit my administration of the prison and the operation of the Mutual Welfare League.

"When I returned to Sing Sing last July it was with the distinct assurance that the Wardens of the State prisons were to be permitted full control of the details of the respective institutions under their charge, without being subjected to the annoying and mischievous interference, to say nothing of the scandalous persecution, that made good administration at Sing Sing impossible under your predecessor. It was also clearly understood that the Mutual Welfare League system would have what it never yet had—a fair and full trial.

"I regret to say that you have not kept faith, you have forbidden that the public shall have full knowledge of what is going on in their own penal

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institutions, yet this very secrecy which you enforce is the very thing that made possible the graft and brutality of the old system, and still makes possible a continuance of graft and brutality in one of the State prisons under your own charge. Escapes and prison delinquencies which have always existed under the old system, but have been materially reduced under the new are made your excuse for spreading abroad doubt and distrust of the Mutual Welfare League and even for the actual destruction of its activities."

Referring to Mr. Carter's recent ruling, Mr. Osborne continues:

"It is the latest of a series of orders aiming to discredit my administration of the prison and the operation of the Mutual Welfare League. What other interpretation can be placed on your order of September 20, in which you write:

"'I have now come to the definite conclusion that either the new ideas are not workable or that lax methods are employed in their development.'

"You have reached the definite conclusion without sufficient knowledge either of the working of the League in Sing Sing Prison or any real study of the results. You made the short and hurried visit here during Dean Kirchwey's wardenship. You have spent part of one day here since my return—three visits in your seven and a half months of office.

"Having passed twenty years of my life in a successful manufacturing business, I am not ignorant of the necessity of deferring to the orders of the superior officer, but you, sir, as a business man also know that no one can occupy successfully such a position as warden of a State prison unless the control of this institution remains firmly in his own hands, while he is held to strict accountablity for results. Unless you are prepared to trust my judgment you should never have made me Warden of Sing Sing. Having made me Warden of Sing Sing you have no right to make my task impossible. As you are unwilling to extend your cooperation in the great work of developing this new and wonderful system of prison management, it becomes my manifest duty to clear the way for your appointment of another warden."

When Mr. Carter some time ago made a ruling forbidding inmates of New York State prisons to write to or receive letters from women not related to them, and refused to allow of any exceptions to his order, quite irrespective of whether such correspondence was obviously beneficial or not, it was almost a foregone conclusion that he would sooner or later force Mr. Osborne to resign. His action in the matter of correspondence may seem an unimportant one, but what it really indicated was just this, that the Superintendent was committed to the old policy of repression. No man of self-respect could possibly serve under a superior whose method is to make general rulings adapted only to the worst cases and to refuse to allow exceptions. Mr. Osborne was not Warden of Sing Sing because he was in need of a job, but because he had the welfare of the prisoners at heart and was fully convinced on the basis of his own experience that he knew what he was about. To have a superior step in and upset everything by arbitrary and unreasonable interference made his task hopeless and there was nothing left to do but to resign and allow the Superintendent to replace him by a man of his own type, and to push his reforms in some other way.

Escapes from prison have always occurred even under the strictest regime. They have been less frequent in Sing Sing under Mr. Osborne than formerly, but this means nothing to a man of Mr.

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Carter's mind. Now and then a prisoner writes an improper letter—therefore, stop them all from writing; now and then an inmate who has been trusted not to run away does so—therefore, lock them all up. It is unfortunate that escapes occur, but prisons have other functions besides confinement and these are worthy of consideration. The total prison population is but a small part of the entire criminal part of the community and the number of bad men at large is not perceptibly increased by the addition of a few getaways. To say that escapes should be prevented is quite a different matter from saying that they should be prevented *at all costs.* The cost may be entirely too great, and very generally has been. Which is better, to foster the sense of honor and self-government in convicts, at the expense of an occasional escape, or to prevent that escape by methods which breed the spirit of hatred and revenge in hundreds of men? Which is better, to turn ninety-five per cent of the prison population into fairly decent citizens at a small risk, or to stick to the old system which counted forty per cent of recidivists? Which is better, to pay for catching and returning a few runaways, or to pay for catching and trying the large percentage of men which the old system of repression turned out only to come back again? It is quite as logical to suppress the parole system because five or ten per cent of the men break their parole. It is not only absurd to get into a nervous fit and clap the lid on, but is a gross injustice to the large majority of inmates who, no matter how long their terms or what their offense, are trying to make good and should be given every encouragement to do so. We have heard a lot about maudlin sentimentalism, but Mr. Carter's actions present a well defined case of prison hysteria. Here is a teacher, if you wish, who loses his head and thrashes the whole school because a few boys have played truant, a gardener who pulls up every plant in his garden lest a few of them may be weeds, a man who cannot look through a window and see the vista beyond because his eyes are riveted on the fly specks on the glass.

I am not asking any one to accept my personal views as to the proper treatment of prisoners, but just consider a few facts. The District of Columbia has a workhouse which is not surrounded by a wall. It is now erecting a "prison" for long term convicts which is not to have a wall about it. The Government (I am not referring to the Department of Justice) after a thorough study of the results obtained elsewhere has concluded that it is safe to handle the prisoner like the average man, provided he is given healthy employment and is treated with decency. Doubtless secure quarters will be provided for the few incorrigibles, but these are the exceptions; the whole institution is not to be conducted on the principle of one rule fitted for the worst and no exceptions. Here and there over the country prisoners are being sent out to work on roads and farms without guard, and the principle on which such men are

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selected is based on their behavior within the walls, not, as Mr. Carter would have it, on the length of a sentence imposed by a court which has had them under observation but a few hours at most, not on the theoretical opinion of a prison superintendent who has never seen them, but as a result of observation by officials who are in daily contact with them. The New York Superintendent has had eight months' experience in prison management and in that time has made three short visits to Sing Sing and knows nothing of the men on whom he passes sentence; in his official equipment there is no place for personal knowledge, no room for taking chances on even the best risks. But he is the boss, and as such has the privilege of trampling on the work of his subordinates, and does so without even giving them a hearing.

Whether Mr. Carter is the bull in the china shop, or whether he is simply the tool of the Governor, is a matter of no importance here. The fact remains that he has made untenable the position of the greatest and most successful prison reformer this country has produced. That his intentions are good matters little so long as his mental make-up is such that he can admit of no exceptions. It is reported that Mr. Osborne will take the stump for Judge Seabury, the Democratic candidate for Governor. Nobody can foresee the outcome of the election, but it is almost a foregone conclusion that a change of administration will lead to the appointment of Mr. Osborne as Superintendent of Prisons, a position which will give him greatly increased opportunities for reform, including a whack at the old system as represented at that "model" but thoroughly devilish institution at Dannemora. In that event one could hardly regret that Mr. Carter has served as an emetic on the New York prison system.

Request To Correspondents

Correspondents who report to us the discharge or parole of prisoners should be careful to mention names in order that our records may be corrected. We lost quite a little money in the course of the year by continuing to send the CRITIC to prisoners who have left.

Shadows

I gazed so long at a shadow that I lost the light behind it.
One is only safe with shadows if one carries light within.
I fear neither shadow nor light!
As I know the meaning of both, neither has power to harm me.
If you knew why shadows are fearful you would cease to feel their menace;
If you knew the meaning of light you would yourself be a light in a dark place.

—*Elsa Barker; Songs of a Vagrom Angel*

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Songs of A Vagrom Angel

Elsa Barker; Songs of a Vagrom Angel, $1.05. Loaned.

Those who have read those two remarkable books by Elsa Barker, *Letters from a Living Dead Man* and *War Letters from the Living Dead Man,* will recall a Beautiful Being who acted as his guide at times. Through these *Songs of a Vagrom Angel* we are now permitted to learn something more closely of this Being. As is the case with the first two books, Mrs. Barker claims that the songs are not original with her, but were simply written down from the dictation of her mysterious visitor, who held her for an uninterrupted twenty-two hours. Plainly speaking, we have here a very remarkable case of automatic writing, be the explanation what it may. It would seem to be an impossible feat to write down these forty-nine poems, all of them good and many of them of great excellence, without previous consideration or subsequent alteration or editing, in the space of twenty-two hours, and we doubt if the best writer could stand the strain without petering out. But such is the fact and you may explain it as you wish.

You have certainly heard of sylphs and possibly you have heard of devas. If you want to know something of what a sylph or a deva is like, you can learn it by reading these songs. And you may draw encouragement from thinking that in the invisible world into which we shall all sooner or later enter, there are beings who do not eternally moralize or sing psalms, but whose duty it is to breath out beauty with each breath. There is something so delightfully childlike and yet so mature, so wayward and still so lofty, so playful and yet so serious in this Unnamed Being that one cannot but be fascinated with her—I say *her,* for the character is unquestionably feminine. It is quite beyond my power to describe this vagrant angel who treads on rainbows and walks with God from one end to the other of the Milky Way and who is allowed to talk to him as a child talks to its parents and its playmates. She is no human being, for she has never inhabited a human body, but she understands much better than most of us the reasons for physical incarnation, in witness of which let me quote the very shortest and by no means the best of the songs:

> Tears in your eyes, poor infant?
> 'Twas only a touch of your own Father's hand!
> He sought to caress you with the life-giving contact of knowledge and heart-break;
> But knowing not the weight of His great hand, He made you weep.

After all, I think heaven must be a pretty nice place and I commend the *Songs of a Vagrom Angel* as an antidote alike to those who have gained their notions of that place or condition from the teachings of the church or the writings of Mr. Leadbeater.

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An Appreciation

The editor wishes to express his sincere thanks to those members who have gone on steadily with their work and have not lost patience with him for not writing them a nice and encouraging letter every week; also to those who have not lost faith in our work because an occasional prisoner abuses the privilege of correspondence, or an occasional official blames us with the delinquencies of some inmates; also to those who understand that an office and a publication cannot be conducted on expressions of good will and the hope that some one else will appreciate the fact, but who have come forward with the hard cash in such sums as they could afford, no matter how small.

The Widow's Mite

A very high compliment was paid to the widow who cast her two mites into the treasury, but we have searched the scriptures in vain for reference to the widow, or any one else, for that matter, who stood in front of the slot and poured in good wishes. But that was in the old times, when people knew nothing of the power of thought in paying bills.

Prisoners desiring correspondents or jobs should write to us.

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This paper has no bondholders, mortgagees or other security holders.

(Signed) H. N. STOKES, *Editor*

Sworn and subscribed before me October 7th, 1916.

FRANK B. TIPTON, *Notary Public*

My commission expires November 23d, 1916.

To the O. E. Library League, ***Date.....***

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

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Observations of A Prisoner

Dr. H. N. Stokes ———— Prison, Sept. 17th, 1916.

Dear Sir:—

P. C., an acquaintance who recently became a member of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE, has so interested me in the mutual advantages to be derived from it that I decided to become a member also, if I may, please. His enthusiasm was so marked that I caught the spirit of it. Not only P. C., but at least half a dozen other fellows whom I know here have perceptibly brightened in manner and speech since coming in touch with members of the LEAGUE. To my certain knowledge two of these fellows were formerly melancholy sort of chaps, but now they are cheerful and altogether unlike their former selves. When asked the reason for their sudden change (knowing they had a long time to do yet) I was told to "Get in touch with Dr. Stokes—he is the cause." So after further inquiry I decided to follow the advice of P. C. and others, for a little sunshine in my existence here would not be amiss. . . .

R. W. P.

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

CHEWING THE CUD OF SATISFACTION

Have you ever noticed a group of cattle lying in the shade on a sultry day, busily chewing, chewing, chewing? What are they doing?—they possess neither gum nor tobacco. What they are doing is this, they are practising that highly commended habit "meditation." Their meditation is of a material kind. Deep down inside they have a sort of supplementary stomach, the rumen, which they hastily cram with grass. Then they retire to a quiet and comfortable place, and there, "having made the mind one-pointed, with thought and the functions of the senses subdued, steady on their seat, holding the body, head and neck erect, immovably steady, looking fixedly at the point of the nose, with unseeing gaze," they practise yoga; that is to say, they vomit up portions of the half-chewed and entirely undigested material and proceed to masticate and enjoy it fully at their leisure.

That man is not usually classed among the ruminating animals, that is, among those which chew the cud, is because anatomists limit their classification to physical features. Considered from the spiritual standpoint, men, or at least some men, are distinctly ruminants, to be classed with the ox. Looked at from a higher plane there is little to distinguish a person practising meditation from an ox chewing the cud.

When little Jack Horner poked his thumb into the Christmas pie and pulled out a plum, he is said to have remarked "What a great boy am I!" Jack was doing just what most of us do when we learn some great spiritual truth. We take a lot of credit to ourselves; we probably swallow it undigested as does the ox his grass; then we "meditate" and chew it at our leisure, deriving great satisfaction from the process and all the while thinking "What a great boy am I!" As far as plums are concerned, Jack was a typical Pharisee.

Of course I am not objecting to knowledge in itself, nor am I objecting to meditating on it and to getting the fullest possible satisfaction from its possession. The greater your knowledge the better, supposing it to be of the right sort, and the enjoyment aids

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assimilation. What I want to emphasize is that knowledge inevitably brings responsibility, provided it is of a kind which you can apply. If it is not put into practice it merely makes you a sinner in place of an ignoramus. A big man in the Bible remarked that "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." There you have the whole matter in a nutshell. There is plenty of knowledge which you can pick up and cannot by any means apply. Some of this serves to limber up your mind or to give you a broader outlook; other kinds simply turn your brain into a bric-a-brac shop. How far you can safely go in the accumulation of bric-a-brac may depend on your storage capacity, but there is a class of knowledge which is distinctly dangerous unless it is utilized. The more you turn it over and over, the more you "chew" it, so much the worse for you if you do not use it. Such knowledge is a spiritual tool. To possess it, to meditate on it and to congratulate yourself on its possession, to tell others that you have it and to get them to turn it over and congratulate themselves on it, there is absolutely no merit in that. Tools are made to be used, not to be looked at or talked about. In fact there is positive demerit in having one which one does not use. Nobody can specially blame him who has no tool to work with, but when he has the tool and will not work, then he is a shirker.

I do not see why I should not speak frankly to the man who rejoices over an unused tool as he would over a nicely colored meerschaum pipe. A work of art is made to be admired, but the principles taught by our more advanced thinkers, be they Theosophists or what not, to say nothing of the great men of the Bible, are not curios or works of art. To prate about brotherhood, to turn over and admire the idea of helping others, to tell how beautiful it is, to sit and meditate on it, and to let it go at that, this is treating it precisely as you treat the colored pipe—it is to treat it as a curio. You know the term "criminal negligence." Well, that is what St. James had in mind when he used the expression quoted above. To meditate on brotherhood and service, and not to act the brother and the helper, that is distinctly criminal negligence. And this to the believer in the law of Karma—if you believe that an unkind act of yours will inevitably lead to suffering on your part sometime in the future, if that principle is true, then it must also be true that an act of neglect on your part will lead to your being neglected in the future. If you spend your time talking and meditating over brotherhood while you neglect the sufferer at your very door, what will be the result, supposing there is anything in the law of Karma? Just this—instead of finding yourself "at the Feet of the Master" in some future incarnation, you yourself will be neglected, you will find yourself in the same condition, an outcast perhaps, or perhaps a prisoner. You will be needing the help you refused to give Your spiritual wealth, your knowledge of the laws of the universe

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will not prevent your having to change places, as Dives did with Lazarus.

I know a lot of fine people who get together Sunday nights and talk over the beauties of the conception of brotherhood. If you want to know "the reason why," here is just the place to find it. They not only know why the world exists and how it came into being and its destiny, but they possess a fairly accurate map of the invisible world. Not a few of them are under the impression that when their bodies are asleep in their warm and comfortable beds their souls go forth to help the poor wanderers who have lost their way in this invisible world. In fact I know of no better place to learn in a general way what one's duties in the world are. "Service," that is the keynote of their song. They are all believers in preparedness. Preparedness for what? Preparedness to meet their Master and to listen to more talk from high authority on the nature of brotherhood. In fact, their meetings afford a jolly good time, and one often departs with the feeling that brotherhood and service —in the abstract—are just about the biggest things going.

I once approached these friends with the suggestion that service exists, not in talk but in practice, that talking over what should be. without at the same time making some effort to help things to be as they should be, is but fiddling while Rome burns. I suggested that while they were talking and smelling incense, and congratulating themselves on having the truth, within a short distance of where they were, and at that very moment, there were women and children starving, that there were young people growing up to be criminals, families in distress because their supporters were in prison, men in prison who needed light, and that some effort to help these people would be a practical application of their theories, not quite as easy as floating around in astral nightgowns as invisible helpers, to be sure, but still quite in accord with the teachings of their Masters.

Did I get any response? Surely I did. I got a number of letters telling me that I was extremely narrow minded and that this was not their work. Their work, it was explained to me, was to preach, not to practise, to be hearers and teachers, not doers of the Word, and that such things as practising could be done by any common person who could not think. And at last report these good people were still meeting, analyzing and dissecting brotherhood, practising meditation, chewing their cud of satisfaction and discussing the ways in which others—who cannot think!—can be of service to the world.

About a year ago a certain association which makes a specialty of such matters and which has its telescope out looking for the approach of a Great Teacher, held its annual convention. The subject for discussion was "What can we do to prepare ourselves to meet the Coming Master?" Finally a leading pundit arose and suggested that preparation for meeting the Master could well be made

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by studying geometry. And after all, is not this reasonable? A great philosopher has said that "God geometrizes." What then could be better in the way of preparing a lot of celestial small talk than to cram up on geometry? Evidently, in the opinion of this pundit, the Coming Teacher who is to set the world straight is to be a professor of mathematics.

It is so everywhere. I am not talking of those who frankly cultivate religion with the notion of escaping from the results of their sins, of shirking their debts. I have in mind those who are really serious and who would like to see the world made better, provided they are left to their meditations. What can you learn in Sunday school? I have seldom gone to Sunday school, but I have seen the printed lessons—a lot about Noah and Jezebel and Balaam's ass, a lot about the necessity of believing this, that and the other thing, but deucedly little about *doing* anything; a lot about trying to be like Christ by thinking about him, but precious little about being like him by imitating and obeying him. Mind you, I am not finding fault with the habit of meditation; I am not criticizing those who get together and talk over "higher things." Taking stock of one's spiritual furnishings now and then is a valuable habit. But I really believe this, that there is little difference between sitting in a warm room and talking over service while the "brothers" are shivering at the door, and sitting in front of the fire at one's club and sipping cocktails. Both give a feeling of exhilaration, but so far as the effect on the world is concerned there is no difference whatever, except that the former is worse. It is just those people who know so much and do not practise it to whom the remark applies about being "sick and in prison and yet visited me not." If you learn the truth you are incurring a great responsibility and will be soundly walloped sooner or later for not applying it—better go to your club and order drinks.

It is quite true that a large part of the evil in the world is the result of selfishness. But whether you take it out in sensual gratification, or whether your selfishness is of the more refined kind to be derived from chewing spiritual cud, is a small matter. You may consider yourself purer and more lofty than another because he takes his enjoyment in a physical way while you get it in what you call a spiritual way. There is but one criterion—the results. Pharisaism is not one bit better than heart disease or liver complaint; in fact, it is worse, for unlike the latter it cannot be cast away with the body. He who talks of brotherhood and does not practise it is as bad as he who talks of temperance and does not practise it.

It isn't a pleasant thought. It is much more agreeable to think that your cud chewing, involving little or no self-denial, is going to make you as comfortable and self-satisfied in the future as you are in the present. It is delightful to think that if you can but raise your inner vision to a higher pitch you cannot only see but actually converse with

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a Master, that if you meditate hard enough, or mutter enough mantrams, or sing enough hymns, or pray enough prayers, or emit enough smoke from your incense pots, you will attract the attention and the approval of the really worth while souls. It is agreeable to look forward to a new Teacher when you have not learned the lessons of the one who came and was disregarded. But I imagine that the only way in which you can avoid making yourself ridiculous before the onlookers from the heights above is to see to it that you actually take a hand in the work of the world, in helping to mend the flaws which God has left in his creation in order that you may be co-workers with him. I doubt greatly that those who sit and wait for the Great Teacher will ever be gratified. The place to find him will be in the slums and the prisons, not in the churches and the lodge rooms. And after all the Great Teacher is with us now and we do not see him. He is no other than our Brother Man.

What Can I Do?

It is not every one who knows where to take hold. It is often said that one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives. Limited to their comfortable homes and moving in a restricted circle of society, many who would really like to lend a hand do not know where to begin.

If any such will write to the Editor of the CRITIC, they will be promptly shown how to make a beginning. They will be put in touch with the submerged half without the necessity of leaving their homes, or of devoting more than a small part of the time which they otherwise seek to "kill." We will guarantee that if they are really in earnest they will not let go until their ideas of the submerged half have undergone a radical change, and until the question will be, not "What can I do?" but "Why have I waited so long to begin?"

The Humanitarians

Instead of sending money or luxuries to prisoners, it is recommended that those who want to spend a dollar or so in this way should enroll them as members of THE HUMANITARIANS, who will secure them employment in advance of their discharge. We will send prisoners' application blanks on request. The fee for prisoners is one dollar, which may be sent to *E. C. Landis, Treasurer, Box 2, Lansing, Kansas.* If more convenient to send it to us we will forward it.

We get many letters from prisoners expecting soon to be released and who need work, but do not have the dollar for enrollment. Any money sent to us specifically for this purpose will be used in helping needy prisoners in this way.

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Getting Together

During the past six weeks I have addressed no less than six gatherings of men and women on the subject of "Prisons and Prisoners," and it occurs to me that a few findings may be of interest to those who read the CRITIC.

In nearly every instance surprise is shown that there is any real pleasure derived from correspondence with prisoners. My audiences seem to expect to hear tales of hardship, of "sacrifice" on my part, and perhaps, only perhaps, they regard me as one not quite "safe" to ask to their own houses—for I do not associate, by mail at least, with social outcasts?

And who made them outcasts? We! Because we are too lazy minded to see to it that the authorities are proper ones. For instance: A man came to America, a skilled mural decorator. He was not allowed to work because he was not a member of the Labor Union. Why? He had not $35 to pay for that honor! That is our fault. We encourage the Labor Union; we allow it to exist—and it is an absolute contradiction to the spirit of freedom. No man is *free to work!* He must pay $35 to join the Union! We may however feel sorry for the man who can't work because he doesn't belong to the Union, and we read that he has become a counterfeiter. He is railroaded to the penitentiary; he is not allowed a lawyer; he is denied a fair trial; he is a "stranger" and we pass him by! But now what comes? He desires to study. He cannot find the right books—and someone tells him of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE.

He writes and asks for a correspondent and one is found.

Suppose that one is too selfish to spend ten cents for registration in the LEAGUE. Do you think that means she won't be a good correspondent for that man? Yes! Have you ever seen a woman or a man allow the conductor to pass and when he has failed to *ask* for the fare, the coin was slyly dropped into the purse or slipped into the glove; a smile sometimes telling of the inward elation at "beating the car out of a ride?" But that one's honor was worth less than five cents! So is one's real charity worth less than ten cents when it is withheld. For the one who, week after week and month after month, makes no exertion to put aside a quarter, or a dollar, to help run the LEAGUE, I would tell one truth: All your life you have "received"—now, what do you give? No one is without some way to buy food. One meal will cost ten cents. One meal a week less will give you ten cents if no more and that will mean better digestion for you—and if each will send ten cents a week we will be able to do more work.

I love every one of my boys! I couldn't spare one of them. And when my heart aches and I must wipe away my tears, which come unbidden, when my arms ache for that dear son who is gone, I go to my table and write to my boys—God bless them—they give me

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more than the world gives, *real* friendship and honor, and every cent I can find is my contribution.

Let us each one do *all* we can, not just ten cents a week. Let us go over and over our money affairs; let us get together in some way. No one is making any money out of our LEAGUE. We are doing God's work. Isn't that big enough to keep busy? Let us *show* what we are!

One story and I am done. One of my boys told me this:

"The first Sunday I was in prison and the horror of it was beginning to settle down over my boyhood, I sat near the door of my cell. After awhile a tall negro passed the door, going up the hall. He was looking ahead of him and his face was the saddest face I ever saw in all my life. I wondered who he was and after awhile an orderly came along and I asked 'Who was that negro?' 'Hunt is his name—he is a lifer.' I shrank back. 'Poor devil,' thought I, 'you are sad indeed,' for I could remember yet the soft fields and the trees.

"By and by he came back. As he passed I heard him singing low, in the sweetest voice I ever heard, 'Jesus, lover of my soul.'

"I cried for sheer pity for that man in his sadness. He is entirely forgotten. His parole was due since then—he has served fifteen years—but it was denied; he has no friends, no money!"

Reader, *you* are accepting the existing conditions if you sit quiet and *do nothing—you* are guilty! We *are* our brothers' keepers, and we go on drinking soda, eating candy, dressing our old bodies up trying to cheat age—and we *could* be helping *to build a Man!*

MATILDA ROOME DUVALL.

Membership In The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired.

Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

Theosophical Correspondents Wanted

A large Theosophical class in a Western prison has asked us to secure its individual members correspondents competent to help them in this study. We have told them to send the names along and that we would provide for them. If any of our members who are Theosophists are able to take on additional correspondents they are asked to report to us at once. They are also asked to interest their Theosophical friends in this work. Prompt action is requested.

Registered LEAGUE membership number, November 6, 5839

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Sequel to Four Great Religions.

The Riddle of Life and How Theosophy Answers It, colored plates, boards, $0.40; paper, sold only, $0.25.

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Some Problems of Life, $0.55.

The Spiritual Life; Vol. II of *Essays and Addresses,* $1.00.
Contains the gist of Mrs. Besant's ethical writings.

Sri Rama Chandra, the Ideal King, $0.75.

The Story of the Great War, $1.25.
Some Lessons from the Mahabharata.

A Study in Consciousness, $2.00.
An elaborate treatise on the nature of the mind, much used by students. The chapter on the will is very practical.

A Study in Karma, $0.75.
The best introduction to the subject.

Superhuman Men in Religion and in History, $0.75.

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The best book for beginners and study classes.

Theosophy and Life's Deeper Problems, Convention Lectures, 1915, $0.50.

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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WHO ARE THE THEORISTS?

The term "maudlin," as applied to prison reformers, has been with us for some time. The New York Superintendent of Prisons has now enriched the already overflowing vocabulary of penology by the addition of the term "sentimental slush." "We have too much sentimental slush mixed up with the prison reform movement," says Mr. Carter, in his talk before the recent convention of the American Prison Association, "with a lack of hard common-sense." Mr. Carter's high position and intimate practical knowledge of convicts—he has had nine months' experience in running the New York prisons from his chair in the Department at Albany—will doubtless lend respectability to his contributions to linguistics.

The matter after all narrows itself down to the question "Who are the theorists and who are the people of practical training and hard common-sense?" The practical man is the man who has gained his knowledge by direct contact with the facts and conditions of the field which he represents. And so far his views are worthy of consideration and deference. A trained physician has the advantage over him who has never studied anatomy, physiology, pathology, therapeutics, bacteriology and the other sciences affecting his profession; the engineer is competent to speak on construction work in his field; nobody who has not practised chemistry or farming has an opinion of much value on these subjects. One could quote instances without end.

We worship the practical man, but we also have many delusions about him. The practical man is a practical man in just those subjects in which he has had actual experience. Outside of that he is largely a theorist. He may have a second-hand knowledge of allied subjects, entitling his opinions to some weight, but he is not a practical man as regards them. For instance, a doctor may be an expert in treating your liver, but you would not trust him to cut out your appendix unless he is a practical surgeon; he may be an expert at abdominal surgery, but might know little more about cutting into the brain than you do. The civil engineer who lays railroads is not the man to build a skyscraper. This does not hold only in the arts and sciences. The judge may be an expert

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in criminal law, but he may know no more about human nature, and even less, than the man on whom he passes sentence. He knows what latitude the law allows him, but when it comes down to the question of deciding whether the offender can and will make good without the maximum penalty he is often going largely on guess work. Not only this, but the practical man is often given credit for results which occur in spite of his methods. Nobody knows today how many patients get well in spite of the dosing they receive, and how many are killed by it, but certain it is that methods once in vogue have been abandoned because they have been found to be positively injurious.

One does not have to go very far into history to discover that the theorist of former days has often become the practical man of today. How about the men who set forth to reach India by sailing to the westward, in spite of the predictions of the authorities that it could not be done? How about the practical mechanics who ridiculed the notion of the flying machine, or the practical electricians who regarded talking at a distance as an absurd dream? Anybody with a little patience can collect hundreds of instances where the practical man has been wrong and the theorist right. Two centuries ago and less it was the custom to execute men for comparatively trivial offenses against law and order. Why? because the lawmakers, who regarded themselves as men of practical knowledge and hard common-sense, maintained that it was the only way to prevent crime. Yet it did not prevent it. The theorists, who were the "maudlin sentimentalists" and purveyors of "slush" in those days, claimed that it was needless severity, and experience has proved them right. Capital punishment for one or two offenses is still with us, but where the theorists have gotten the upper-hand of the men of hard common-sense, and abolished it. there has been no increase of capital crime.

In fact, the practical man is nothing but a theorist with a sound knowledge of a limited field in which what he says is entitled to go, in which he knows fully the value of all the pros and cons. Outside of that restricted field he is likely to be a little tin god with an enormously swelled head, a huge amount of self-assertion and self-esteem with which he has been able to fool his superiors and the public into thinking that he is omniscient—in short, that he is loaded up with hard common-sense.

One does not place lawyers and ex-mayors and newspaper editors at the head of industrial establishments for the very good reason that with all their practical knowledge and hard common-sense they would bring on bankruptcy—the sheriff or receiver would take over the plant. But our practice with public institutions is indicative of any kind of sense rather than the hard variety. That is why we often put men in charge of our public affairs who know little or nothing about them. Who is at the head of the German

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war department? A military man, not a lawyer. Who is at the head of their navy? A naval officer, not a journalist. How is it with us? Once, not so long ago, our leading offices were filled with ex-generals, popular idols, perhaps, but not trained men. We can do this because the nation is big enough and rich enough to pay the costs; it would take a lot to bankrupt us. Today we have gotten largely over the fad for generals, but it is now the politician. You know as well as I that high government positions are everywhere given in return for political services rendered.

Success in business depends on many factors, but it matters little to the employer of labor what the traits of his workmen are so long as they work efficiently. He may object to their drinking, but he does so solely because it makes them poor workmen. If you approach him with the moral argument he would tell you that it was "sentimental slush," and so far as he is concerned he would be right; he is after the dividends, nothing else. But when you come to those institutions which have more than the dividend, or at least, more than some monetary consideration as their aim, then the moral question begins to loom up. What is a prison? It is an institution for confining offenders and making them work—or loaf, as the case may be—and it is also, as some of us think, an agent in reforming them and preparing them for the future. Therefore he who manages a prison must not only be a practical man in the narrow sense—he must be a practical psychologist, that is, he must understand human nature, not only one side, but all sides. Take a somewhat similar case. Schools do not exist just to make boys cram a lot of knowledge into their heads. They exist for the future, for the development of character as well as the turning out of so much work, the passing of so many examinations. Else, why waste the time? He would be a poor college president who limits himself to what one might call the mechanical details, and who restricts himself to enforcing a code of rules. To construct characters needs quite a different sort of knowledge than these. To understand the young one must be able to see through their eyes. We may call the attitude of the mother "sentimental slush," if we like, but who does not know that such "slush" means more than almost anything else, and that one of the most prolific causes of young people going wrong is that they are not understood at home?

It is quite possible to associate with others without knowing anything about them but the exterior; most of us do this. Even those who think that they know human nature very often know nothing but the exteriors of many people. As to the insides, they are out and out theorists. We judge from actions without the least knowledge of causes, and make up a code of rules which are adapted to certain conditions, but which fall short when it comes to problems such as the teacher or other person who has to handle

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men from an educational standpoint requires. If we do not have this sympathetic attitude, no matter how far we may be versed in what we call practical we shall fail. Anybody who knows the details of prison management can run a prison when he is supplemented by men with guns and by dark cells and other such arrangements for making up for his ignorance of the men with whom he is dealing. What I want to emphasize is this, that the prison problem, the problem of reclamation, needs much more than this; it needs a sympathetic insight into human nature. To run a prison "successfully"—that is, to keep order and discipline, and turn out men 40 per cent of whom come back; men who have been made desperate and revengeful, that may indicate hard commonsense, perhaps, but one would hardly infer it from noting the results. The practical man who does this after all is quite as much a theorist as the so-called sentimentalist.

One does not have to berate the men who govern our penal institutions. They have a hugely difficult job, the reclamation of a human scrap heap. And just because it is a scrap heap an understanding of the elements making it up is needed. Iron discipline is necessary, without doubt; it is quite true that a large portion of prison inmates are there because they have never been taught to lead disciplined lives. But no one attempting to utilize a junk pile would lay down one fast rule which cannot be departed from in any case—even a junk handler would know better. Here are rags—they are picked out and go to the paper mill; here are bones—they go to the fertilizer works; the bottles—they go to the glass works; and the scrap iron—it goes to the foundry. How do we run our prisons? There is hardly one, until recently, which uses the intelligence of the junk sorter—one rule for all, and no exceptions—chuck the whole waste pile into the cupola of the foundry or the beater of the paper mlll, and justify it by a lot of abuse of the mollycoddles, the sentimentalists, who are believers in individuality!

Without doubt there are those who indulge in too much sentimentality. But in general they are no more theorists than the practical man who enriches the English language with new terms for abusing them. They may not know the practical details of managing a prison economically, but they do know this, that not only must the individuality of each man be taken into account, but that no prison, no more than a family or a school, can be a success if there is not a sympathetic grasp of those principles of human nature which are common to all, even the worst. That is what the reformers are after; it is hard common-sense, and the use of vulgar epithets, far from squelching them, will finally convince the public —to whom, after all, the prisons belong, and who have the right to demand that they turn out men, not confirmed criminals as they do under the present system—that the users would make much better cow- or swine-herders than builders of men.

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The Election

It will not be forgotten that the Democratic Party was the only one to include a prison reform plank in its national platform. Just what this shall amount to it is up to the Administration and Congress to prove. Several measures of importance were before the past session of Congress, but no action was taken, owing to the extraordinary pressure of other work. One of these was a revision of the present defective and antiquated Federal Parole law; another was a bill for introducing the probation system into United States Courts. Both of these reforms are badly needed. Fortunately the measure waiving the application of the interstate commerce laws in the case of prison-made goods, and allowing the individual states to exclude them at will did not come to a vote, and it is to be hoped that this pernicious measure is finally dead.

The administration of the Federal prisons by the Department of Justice is open to very grave criticism, not only as actually conducted but as a principle, as has been repeatedly pointed out in the CRITIC. The whole matter of prison administration should be taken out of the hands of the Department of Justice, which should have only prosecuting functions. At the present time there is so much red tape in the management of these institutions that officials are greatly hampered in carrying out needed reforms of even a minor character. There is no system of convict labor in vogue, other than the employment of prisoners in what might be called "household work." The reorganization and charge of the Federal prisons should be placed in the hands of a permanent Prison Commission composed of experts in technical, educational and penological fields. It is not a business which can be properly conducted by committees of senators or representatives, nor is it a matter for a Department having judicial functions.

The plan of having a public defender as well as a prosecuting attorney has met with great success wherever it has been adopted, and has resulted not only in better administration of justice, but in a great saving to the state. It is to be hoped that the coming Congress will authorize the appointment of a public defender for each United States Court having to do with criminal cases.

The re-election of Governor Hunt, of Arizona, and of Governor Capper, of Kansas, will aid the progressive prison policies of these states. We wish we could say the same about Governor Phillips, of Wisconsin, but according to all reports he has done nothing to relieve the abuses in the institution at Waupun. Presumably the re-election of Governor Whitman, of New York, means the continuance of the reactionary policies of Mr. Carter and the brushing aside of Mr. Osborne and his liberal and enlightened methods. The reign of "hard common sense," with emphasis on the "hard" is at hand.

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That the drink and crime problems are closely related cannot be denied. Statistics are to be had in plenty; here is one case. According to the last number of *Lend A Hand,* during the first ten months of 1915, when Oregon was wet, the commitments to the State Penitentiary numbered 248. During the same period in 1916, under the dry regime, they number but 134. If we take the last five months of each period, so as to eliminate those whose offenses were committed under the wet policy, but who were sent to prison later, we find that the number of commitments has fallen off to 36 per cent! A pretty good showing for prohibition, hey? That five more states have voted dry and that 24 states are now in the dry ranks is a matter for sincere rejoicing.

A Prisoners' Pledge

The inmates of an Eastern state prison have recently signed and forwarded us the following pledge. This action was taken without any suggestion on our part, or on that of the authorities, and it includes all of the LEAGUE members in that institution with a single exception.

"We, the undersigned members of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE, and inmates of the Rhode Island State Prison, believing that it would be detrimental to the LEAGUE and to us personally, to receive any sums of money from our various LEAGUE correspondents for any purpose other than education or re-establishment, do hereby agree that hereafter, money sent for any other object to LEAGUE members by their LEAGUE correspondents, shall be either returned to the sender, or, with his consent, utilized for the benefit of the night school."

I think this speaks highly for the character of the average man behind the bars. The men in this institution do not differ from those in others; they are almost without exception without funds; they have no means of securing them, and they are not given any compensation, or at least receive practically none, for their work. But they have appreciated the efforts which our members are making for them, and are unwilling to go on record as begging from them.

It has not been thought advisable to insist on any form of pledge from our prison members. These things are largely matters of individual circumstance. At the same time, I think such a pledge is one which each inmate could well make to himself as well as his correspondent, in spirit if not in words. Begging is not a part of the equipment of the real man, the man who wants to make good. It can be justified only under extreme circumstances, and such do not as a rule exist in prisons, where the inmates are lodged and fed and clothed by the state. I am glad to say that we receive surprisingly few complaints from our correspondents. At the same time when such complaints are made to us we usually recommend that money be given only when the request is endorsed by a responsible official. When actual annoyance occurs we simply drop the

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offending member from our lists and he is no longer eligible for the benefits of the LEAGUE. It would be impossible to take up correspondence on the subject, as we have enough to do already. But those inmates who have sent "requisitions" to their correspondents, and who find that they are no longer in touch with us, can seek the explanation in their own actions.

It must be added that those inmates who ask for correspondents and do not show those who write to them the courtesy of a reply, are simply dropped and will not be reinstated until they have given some sort of explanation more cogent than that the letter received did not appeal to them. Nobody is obliged to continue to write to an uncongenial correspondent, and another will be assigned on request. But he who has not the innate courtesy to recognize the effort to help him, no matter how unsuccessful it may be, is not likely to treat a second correspondent any better.

Books For Prisoners

We call the attention of members to the fact that many prisons admit books sent to prisoners only when shipped direct from a publisher or dealer. Those who order books sent in this way will help our work by ordering them through us, as our library label admits them. The price is the same as elsewhere, and the dealer's profit goes to supporting our work.

Don't forget this when buying books for prisoners.

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The Stanzas of Dzyan, with Introduction and Notes, cloth, $0.40; leather, sold only, $1.00.

The Voice of the Silence, cloth, $0.50; paper, sold only, $0.20; leather, sold only, $0.75.

Cloth and leather editions also contain the Stanzas of Dzyan. This claims to be a paraphrase of very ancient manuscripts and is of high occult and spiritual value.

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Vol. VI Wednesday, December 13, 1916 No. 9

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OLD MAIDS' COURT

For the female of the species is more deadly than the male.
—Kipling

The Pharisee who went up into the temple to pray, and who fulfilled his religious duty by telling the Lord how much better he was than his neighbor the publican in the next pew, without doubt derived much consolation from this simple act of worship. To seek merit for ourselves, not by actually earning it, but by asserting that somebody else is worse than we are, may appear illogical, but it is the method to which perhaps all of us resort at times—it is so very easy. In order to demonstrate our own superiority and therefore to put in a plea with the Lord for a reward, we do not have to present any concrete facts about ourselves; we simply have to show, or attempt to show, that others are bigger sinners than we are. There is such a thing as shining by reflecting the light from others—in this case we attempt to shine by reflecting the darkness of others.

Whatever we may think in our lucid intervals of the behavior of the Pharisee there is this to be said in his favor. He addressed his remarks in private to a very just and impartial Judge, who was not in the least likely to be taken in by his self-conceit. Whether the Almighty agreed with him or not, it is not to be supposed that He passed on the uncomplimentary judgment to the neighbors and friends of the publican. Would that we were all as select in the choice of an audience when we wish to indulge in tale-bearing!

We have several kinds of courts, established by law, which fulfil their functions in a more or less halting way; but whatever their shortcomings they endeavor to do justice to those who are brought before them. Theoretically at least, the accused is assumed to be innocent until his guilt is demonstrated beyond question to the satisfaction of a presumably unprejudiced judge or jury. One cannot be tried without a formal indictment regarding the nature of which he is fully informed in advance. He is given ample time to prepare his defense; he can summon his own witnesses, and supposing he is well enough off financially to pay for it, he can hire the very best legal talent to out-talk the prosecuting attorney; he

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cannot be twice indicted, tried and punished for the same offense. The accused has the right to be present and hear all the testimony and to cross-examine the witnesses or raise objections to what they say; he has the right of appeal if he can show a flaw in the indictment or if new evidence presents itself. The sessions of the court are open to the public. Any witness who knowingly makes a false statement can be punished for perjury, and in any event is allowed to tell only what he himself knows, but not what he has heard somebody else say he thinks he knows. This method of doing justice is one which has developed through the ages; like all things human it is imperfect, but what I want to emphasize is that no man can be tried, in theory at least, without the fullest opportunity for defending himself, and cannot be punished without legal conviction.

Side by side with the legally established courts, however, is one which goes back to times beyond historic record, and which has come down to the present day essentially unchanged—the Old Maids' Court. I use this term, Old Maid, in the metaphorical sense and without the least intention of casting a slur on unmarried ladies of a certain, or uncertain age, and including men as well as women of any age who follow its methods. The Old Maids' Court is not legally appointed—it appoints itself. The principles on which it operates are interesting and in nearly every respect the absolute reverse of those of the civil and criminal tribunals. Here are some of them:

1. The motto of the Old Maids' Court is: "Why considerest thou the mote that is in thine own eye, but beholdest not the beam that is in thy brother's eye?"

2. The Court does not sit at any specified place or time. Clubs, boudoirs and afternoon teas are preferred; also the time just before or after divine worship.

3. There are no written indictments. Every member prepares his own, which he is at liberty to change or add to at any time, and the indictments are lumped. Consequently the final form bears no resemblance to the original—a bad temper becomes drunkenness; drunkenness becomes lust; late hours at office or at business meetings become "a woman in the case;" inability to collect one's revenues becomes embezzlement; while positive virtues, such as thrift, become stinginess and self-indulgence at the expense of others, and evidence of secret sins; silence under abuse and calumny becomes evidence of guilt; interest in prisoners becomes proof that one is oneself an ex-convict. But why multiply examples?

4. The guilt of the accused is assumed until he proves his innocence.

5. He is not allowed to prove his innocence, because he is not notified of the existence or nature of the charges against him or of the names of his accusers, or of the time and place of trial and the

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personnel of the court. Consequently he is not permitted to be present, to employ an attorney or to summon witnesses. Quite apart from the fact that this might defeat the object of the Old Maids' Court, some of these people might not be found in the elite directory, and would be quite out of place in the court room, don't you know?

6. In the ordinary court witnesses are expected to limit themselves to what they know. In the Old Maids' Court hearsay has equal rank as evidence.

7. The object of the Old Maid's Court is to find someone guilty. The reason is obvious—the virtues of others are very uninteresting subjects for conversation; if the members could not malign others they would have time to think of their own faults. Consequently, no one is ever acquitted by the Old Maids' Court. There is no such thing as a *nolle prosequi*. A single juryman who stands for conviction—a rare case indeed, for there is generally unanimous acceptance in advance of all incriminating evidence that may be later presented—has the right to issue a new indictment, summon a new jury, or half a dozen of them, and proceed to try the case anew. Sentence may be pronounced an indefinite number of times, and if the accused is of sufficient prominence the aid of the press may be called in up to the point of criminal libel.

8. No records are ever kept of the sessions of the Old Maids' Court. "The minutes of the last meeting" are stored in memory, to be produced at the next session with such alterations and additions as may seem desirable. There is great advantage in this. Not only does it permit of elasticity, adapting the charges and the evidence to the monetary degree of devilishness of the Court, but in the absence of records there is little danger of tangible evidence on which a suit for slander might be based.

9. The oath of a witness in the Old Maids' Court is "To tell the lie, the whole lie, and nothing but the lie, so help me the devil."

10. Members of the Old Maids' Court draw no pay for their services; their reward is in the accentuation of the feeling of self-righteousness.

11. Members of the Old Maids' Court who believe the accused to be innocent are still expected to, and generally do, stand for punishment. "One cannot be too careful," it is said. "If you speak a word in defense you will probably be suspected of being secretly in league with the offender. Therefore look out first of all for your own robe of sanctity; some of the mud which we have thrown might rub off on you, and we should have to try you in turn."

Have you ever observed the behavior of two dogs which meet in the street? If not, do so at the first opportunity. There is nothing in the world so like the actions of the Old Maids' Court, nothing so suggestive of the character of its members. If you

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make a practice of smelling out the character of those whom you know by association or by hearsay, by applying your nose to the rear end of their nature instead of the front end, you are quite likely to find something more or less objectionable to refined tastes, but in so doing you give ample demonstration of what your own tastes are. Every character has its front door as well as its back door. Man has evolved from the brute by developing at the brain end: that is the end to seek for what he is and is aiming to be. If you persist in nosing about the rear end you prove yourself to be—a dog. Try to see the best in every one and leave the rest to deserved oblivion.

One is not obliged to listen to the proceedings of the Old Maids' Court. You cannot always retort to the purveyor of unproved and unprovable slanders, or even to the one who attempts to empty the real sins of others into your mind, that you are not a slop bucket or a cesspool—it is only your intimate friends that you can accord such well-deserved treatment. You must perforce sit and listen at times. But you can always close the inner ear; you can change the subject to the weather or what not. But better by far commit an act of discourtesy than allow your mind to become the depository of the subtle and poisonous germ which, no matter how good your intentions, may unjustly influence your opinion of another. No matter how strong your will it is difficult to avoid prejudice which may bloom into action at the most unexpected moment and work mischief to an innocent person. It is but seldom that you are called on to judge another. When you are, act as the legal court does; accept nothing without giving the accused full opportunity for defense. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

Confessing your own sins is a commendable act, whether you confess to yourself, to the priest, or to the Lord. Of course it has no merit unless you mend yourself, but it gives a preliminary survey of the ground preparatory to cleaning up. But confessing the sins of others has no such value. Still, if you cannot resist the inclination to do so, my advice would be to stop telling them to your neighbor and take it out in telling the Lord. Retire into your closet and pour your brother's faults, real or imagined, into the ear of the All-Hearer. To be sure, it is not likely that the All-Hearer will think any better of you for trying to besmirch the character of another instead of attending strictly to your own sins, but it is likely that you will get a credit mark for your earnest endeavor to keep the mischief from going further. If you really must make a fool of yourself it is better to do so before God than before the world. Calling down the damnation of God on one who offends you is a vulgar habit; as a rule it is merely an explosion of passion, not intended to mean all that it implies. But no matter how sincere may be the imprecation, it is better to take it out in

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cursing, in placing the vengeance in the hands of God, to whom vengeance belongs, than to take it into your own hands and do your own damning by joining the Old Maids' Court and trying your level best to set the human hounds on your enemy.

It is much of a question how far you can hurt another by passing on gossip about him. So far as the world is concerned you can unquestionably injure him. You can take his friends from him, break up his family, ruin his business and even land him in prison. But you cannot injure his character. In fact, you may be rendering him the greatest service. To do right when everybody applauds you and tells you how noble and good you are requires very little force; you are likely to do what is right in itself just for the praise which you get. There is the gravest spiritual risk in popular applause. On the other hand, it requires some strength to keep on in the face of abuse, slander and misjudgment. "Some people get results if kindly encouraged," said Fra Elbertus, "but give me the man who can do things in spite of hell." And a greater than Fra Elbertus has said "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely." That blessing comes automatically to those who persist in their plain duty, no matter what the Old Maids' Court may decide. A splendid tonic it is to be spoken ill of, and he only needs fear it who works, not for the work's sake, but for the reward, be it social, financial, applause, or the gratification of personal ambition.

Members of the Old Maid's Court are by nature disqualified for all kind of philanthropic work which require a sympathetic insight into the weaknesses of others, specially work for prisoners. Heaven has mercifully left open to them other channels of usefulness, however, such as church fairs, charity balls and other functions for the benefit of the poor whom they are ashamed to associate with, missionary work for propagating among the heathen a gospel which they themselves do not practise, and a place in the donation column in the evening newspaper—evidence that all things find a place in the order of the world.

In conclusion, let me quote an indirectly expressed opinion of an ancient writer regarding the Old Maids' Court, a writer whose words are still read in our churches every Sunday—David the Psalmist:

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

"He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour."

For a Christmas present enroll your prisoner as a member of THE HUMANITARIANS; dues, one dollar a year. They will help him to find work before leaving, and if necessary will pay his expenses to the place where he is to work.

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Financial Help From A Prison

We were greatly touched by the recent receipt of a check for $10.75 from the inmates of the Rhode Island State Prison, accompanied by the following letter. This money was contributed by the inmate members of the LEAGUE and other prisoners who, while not members, had observed the beneficial influence of our work on their companions. The amount contributed is about 26 cents for each of the forty-one contributors. One must remember that these men are not paid for their work and that a cent looks as big to most of them as a dollar does to one on the outside; further, that it represents real self-denial of such small luxuries as a man in prison can purchase. I regret that the names of these kind-hearted men cannot be printed here, and this must serve as an acknowledgment to each of our sincere appreciation. Not only is it a substantial help in meeting our expenses, but it makes us feel, in the midst of many discouragements and criticisms, and not a little opposition, that we are doing something really worth while.

"At the suggestion of Miss Packard, we, the men in the Rhode Island State Prison, got together and what money we could get at the present we have put towards the support of what we consider one of the greatest means of helping men situated as we happen to be at the present time, that the progressive prison reform of the day has brought forth; namely, the promotion of correspondence between men in prison and people outside, such as the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE is doing—and for which it deserves our support, not only in the form of words, but in actual cash.

"Not only does it develop a better feeling among the men, but it also aids them in an educational way, inasmuch as some of them could hardly write when they first started to correspond with outside members, whereas now most of them are quite proficient in that line. Also, it brings to us the realization that the people of today, although ready as ever to prosecute us for transgressing the law (for which they are justified) are not so much as of yesterday willing to persecute us.

"For the two days' time that the men have been contributing I think they have done exceedingly well, also when the fact is considered that they have not the means of earning the money such as might enable them to contribute more than they have. To the men that goes the most credit I think are those who contributed who are not members of the LEAGUE. There were eighteen of these men and they put in just as freely as those who are members of the LEAGUE.

"Hoping that this may help in some small way to pave the way for larger contributions, we are, as ever

"Sincerely yours, "W. P. McN."

Another Christmas Present. Don't forget that the LEAGUE is also in need of Christmas presents of cash. We can probably do five times as much with a dollar as you can.

Automobile Books Wanted. A prisoner wants books on automobile construction and management. Drop us a card and we will tell you where to send them. Don't send them here—this is not a prison.

Correspondents Wanted for colored prisoners.

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Correspondents Wanted For Illiterate Prisoners

We receive many applications for correspondents from prisoner whose education has been neglected and who are therefore not good writers. Some of these have to dictate their letters to others. It by no means follows that these men are otherwise deficient; on the contrary many are very intelligent and have shown wonderful improvement since we have known them. We hesitate to assign these men to new members, many of whom demand fairly well educated inmates, and who are easily discouraged and drop them without notifying us.

We invite offers to take up these men. Some ability to help with English and letter writing is useful, but is not insisted on. All we require is patience and a sympathetic understanding of the man who has had no opportunities.

More Members Wanted

We find it impossible to meet the demands from prisoners for correspondents and our waiting list is steadily growing. You can can help us:

By offering to take one or more additional men.

By interesting your friends, not only in private conversation, but by addressing such clubs or other associations as you may belong to.

By writing to the newspapers. Don't forget to give our address; it is also better to sign your own name. Most of our best workers have come to us through this means.

Answers To Correspondents—By Our Goat

Mrs. L. T. C.—Yes, I will gladly tell you what offense your prisoner committed. He climbed on a chair and raided the jam pot when his mother was at a bridge party. Perhaps you have done the same,—and not got caught.

Miss Julia L. G.—I can't for my life see what my personal opinion on Welsh rabbits, or Theosophy, or the inhabitants of Jupiter has to do with your writing to a prisoner. I am in a position to express my views publicly, and you are not; that is all the difference. But if you choose to deny yourself the privilege and pleasure of helping a man in need of your encouragement because I think that the moon is made of green cheese, and persist in saying so, why, just go ahead.

Mr. R. R. T., No. 1234—Prison—We cannot get you a young unmarried lady as a correspondent just now, but we have a fine six-foot grass widow with a horrible temper and the biceps of a Vulcan, who might be glad to strike up an acquaintance with you—and keep on striking. She appears to need someone to punch, and you apparently need punching, else you would not have mistaken the LEAGUE for a matrimonial bureau.

Mrs. Peter J. Piper—Yes, it is conceivable that a penniless man in California *might* scrape up the carfare and travel to New York for the express purpose of burglarizing your house, seeing that the whole region between the Pacific and Atlantic is an uninhabited desert. But the chances are a million to one greater that your pet poodle will get hydrophobia and bite you. So calm yourself.

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Second-hand theosophical, occult and new thought books sold, bought, or taken in exchange or for credit by arrangement.

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H. P. B. In Memory of H. P. Blavatsky, by Some of her Pupils, paper, $0.40.

Sinnett, A. P.—Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky, $1.00.

The best life of H. P. B.

Wachmeister, Countess—Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and the "Secret Doctrine," cloth, $0.65; paper, sold only, $0.50.

Whyte, Herbert—H. P. Blavatsky, an Outline of her Life, $0.50.

See also *Bragdon,* Episodes of an Unwritten History, and *Olcott,* Old *Diary Leaves.*

Blech, Aimee—To Those Who Suffer, out of print.

Bosman, Leonard—Toward the Summit; The Mysteries of the Qabalah; The Cosmic Wisdom; The Music of the Spheres; The Twelve Labors of Hercules, each, $0.40. Sold only.

Bourchier, Helen—The Crown of Asphodels, $0.40.

Bragdon, Claude—The Beautiful Necessity, $2.00.

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The Crucible ($1.00), out of print.

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS **SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS**

SURGEON OR BUTCHER ?

The danger begins with the moment of arrest. One has traced only too often the boldly formed anti-social grudge that dated from the moment of ill-treatment by an officer of the law.

—Healy: The Individual Delinquent

Our laws are not divinely inspired; they are the reflection of our own sentiments, the crystallization of our own feelings. If we are impelled by revenge or hatred, it shows itself in our treatment of others through the medium of our penal code as well as in our individual behavior. A law is nothing but the expression of public sentiment, the opinion of the majority, or of its representatives, put on record and enforced by the means with which you are all familiar. You have heard the saying "The voice of the people is the voice of God." No thinking person could possibly maintain that God expresses himself in one way on the east bank of the Mississippi and in a diametrically opposite way on the west bank. Nobody could possibly assert that God is for capital punishment in Missouri and against it in Kansas; that he is for whiskey in California and against it in Oregon. On the contrary, laws are just the expression of our methods of meeting the problems which confront us in the course of our evolution from the brute which knows no rule but that of tooth and claw. Quite likely, I think, the problems themselves are of divine origin, placed before us in order to give us exercise in solving them, much as a task is placed before the child in school. But the solution is human, and wholly so. While, then, we must respect and obey the law, pending its betterment, we should divest ourselves of superstitious reverence for that which is a very human product, and bend our efforts towards its improvement.

At the present time man is emerging slowly from the tooth and claw order of things, the order in which the law prevailed of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." This transition stage is illustrated in our conception of punishment, especially as shown in our treatment of offenders. I imagine that the law of retaliation was once necessary, when fear was the only restraining motive

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and when every individual had to look out for himself if he was looked after at all. Later, when men came to cooperate, they banded together to seek revenge—witness the family feuds still existing in some parts of our country—and finally there came the social enforcement of revenge. We do not have to dig very deep into human nature to perceive that retaliation, rather than a scientific conception of punishment, is the basis of our penal system, little though we may admit it. One has but to think of the law of the mob, of the lynchings, of the often heard remarks "He ought to go to prison," or "He deserves to be hung." One has but to remember how carefully the law seeks out the offender, often after years, and brings him to punishment, quite irrespective of that fact that he may have entirely reformed in the meantime and become a good citizen. If reformation, or even deterrence, were the sole aim of punishment such things could not happen. It means that irrespective of consequences, good or bad, we think that the past offender must get "what is due him."

This is undoubtedly true, but in a higher sense. It is just as well remember that "vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," and instead of trying to boost the law of Karma by taking vengeance into our own hands, to leave it where it belongs, and to limit ourselves to those cases where it is indisputably necessary to act promptly for our own protection, instead of waiting for the slow grinding of the mills of God.

Are there such cases? It is still the opinion of even liberal penologists that punishment in itself, in the sense of inflicting actual suffering, physical or mental, cannot always be replaced by another form of treatment. Quite likely. Where fear is the only possible controlling agency, fear must be employed. There are doubtless men no more open to moral persuasion, to the effects of training, than is a wolf or a hyena. But it is a risky business. You can safely assume that your wolf can be controlled only by fear of pain. But man is different; even the most bestial of men is still a man and has human impulses, and until you have tried him you cannot tell. The history of penal practice is full of cases where brutality has but made more brutal, while a rational treatment, based somewhat on the golden rule, has wrought wonders.

But admitting that punishment as such may be necessary at times, let us consider how it works. And first, remember that punishment in itself has no value considered with respect to past misdeeds. It relates solely to the future. It would be puerile to inflict punishment on a man about to die. What has value is the fear of punishment to come. The thrashed child is not made to behave by the past thrashing, but by fear of next time. It is not a high motive. He who behaves through fear is in no sense a moral man; he is just a man afraid of consequences. Usually this fear is a sufficient deterrent; if not then the suffering follows, and rightly.

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But consider this. There is a very close relation between fear and hatred, and this must be considered in imposing punishment. To foster fear often means to foster hatred at the same time, and this is especially the case when and after the punishment has occurred. Those whom we fear we hate. The criminal is not usually at the start an enemy of society in the sense that he hates it. He preys on society for his own purposes, for his support, because he is untrained in a better way of living, or because he lacks self-control, or is the victim of uncontrolled impulses, often of an abnormal nature, such as the drink or drug habits. But this does not imply a grudge against society in general, or against any individual. But the moment you add the element of hatred, the grudge against an individual or society, then you add a further incentive for offense. His hatred adds zest to his actions; he not only loses what social control he still had, but he injures just for the sake of injuring and often finds in his grudge justification for his actions.

While there is a close genetic relation, then, between fear and hatred, yet they are antagonistic in their results. The very fear which should restrain generates a hatred which in turn overcomes the restraint of fear. In punishing you tend to generate two antagonistic feelings—fear of punishment which restrains and hatred of him who inflicts it, which incites to action. Which of these is to get the upperhand is a matter of the individual and cannot be foreseen. In using punishment, especially such punishment as is of a brutal nature and which appears to the recipient as unjust and irrelevant, you are using a two-edged sword and the results may be most disastrous. Naturally there is no use in threatening a penalty which is not enforced, but you must see to it that the law is such as will not annul itself in working out, that it will not produce results worse than those which it is intended to remedy. And that is the effect of much of our penal legislation and procedure. It takes a first offender, locks him up for years under harsh and often irrational treatment and turns him out a confirmed criminal. Once the man has transgressed, has overstepped the line, then he is boosted merrily along the downward course, and from being an offender from selfish motives, he learns to offend just because it gratifies the anti-social grudge which we ourselves have generated—and so bad becomes worse.

It is often said that society must protect itself against depredation by any means in its power, and the simpler the better; that it is not concerned with the inner morality of its units—therefore lock up the delinquents and let them rot in society of their own kind, or chop off their heads. That is largely our practice still, and it is thoroughly false. The individual does not exist for society; society exists for the individual. It is just as much concerned with protecting the individual from himself as with protecting others from him. It is just as much a function of society to reform the delinquent when possible as to protect him from disease. Moral

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delinquency has just as much claim on us as physical delinquency. To deprive a delinquent of his "right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness" belongs in the same category as the isolation of tuberculosis or smallpox patients. There is just as much need for scientific treatment of the morally infirm as of the physically infirm, and to apply any other principle is to replace the surgeon by the butcher. It is not so many years since the insane were mauled about much as we maul the obstreperous criminal today.

The science of penology is still in its infancy, and it has a long way to travel before it can be considered respectable. There are a few men who see something of its scope, who perceive that it is just as complex a matter as medicine or surgery. In a few institutions this is beginning to be recognized, but only in a few, and public opinion has not yet come to the point of demanding that the men in charge of the prisons shall be scientifically trained. When it wakes up it will insist that the prisons shall be as humanely and rationally conducted as are the hospitals.

The present methods of punishment are largely destructive—they belong to the butcher rather than to the surgeon. No matter what one may think of discipline, and unquestionably there must be strict discipline in a prison, nothing can justify it when it leaves the man worse than before. Say what you will, to employ a system which turns a man out into the world less capable, less willing to go straight than before, is simply silly. And this is the result in many cases. We have made a fetish of discipline. No matter how severe it must be directed to one end, to make the man more efficient, more of a man than when he entered the prison. The notion of discipline for punishment must be gotten rid of. Most men who go to prison have led undisciplined lives. But to lead a disciplined life does not mean just obedience to a set of arbitrary rules, with a penality for disobedience. It means cultivation of self-control; it means a motive within, not without; it means filling the mental vacuum with laudable motives and interests; it means training in some honorable pursuit. It is quite impossible to insist on a single set of rules adapted to the worst and to expect good results from the rest. No more could one run a hospital on one drug. I know of a certain prison doctor who has one remedy for everything—salts. That is quite on a par with prison management generally, except that far from being laxative, it is constipating. How about the silent system? How about suppressing the normal exercise of the mind in conversation? How about the rule, unhappily still existing in most institutions, of limiting the inmates to writing one letter a month, or one a week? How about the rule forbidding them to receive decent literature except under almost impossible conditions? How about the rule forbidding them to cultivate decent friendships on the outside? One rule for all, and no exceptions! That is the rule of the abattoir, not of the hospital.

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Our prisons cannot be a success until they are run on scientific principles, as are our hospitals; and this can never be done while they are managed by rule-of-thumb men, men who have not had a scientific training in penology, men who cannot see beyond the notion that rigid discipline means suppression of all normal impulses. The so-called practical man, the man who has been brought up to run a prison in the old way, may do it most efficiently in the same fashion. But we do not even get that far. Who does not know that such positions are often the reward of political services, a dirty job in payment for dirty work

The time will surely come when no one will be regarded as competent just because he has acted as an efficient slave-driver, but because he has been scientifically trained, not only in psychology, but in the economic principles which lie at the root of employing bodies of men and disposing of the products of their labor to their own advantage as well as of the public, and in the educational principles which have to do with making good citizens. It is up to you, as a voter and a tax payer, to inform yourselves in such matters and to use your influence and your vote to see that the ideal of punishment is replaced by the ideal of reclamation, that the present wholesale butchery of delinquents is replaced by a scientific surgery.

The Humanitarians

THE HUMANITARIANS is an organization which undertakes to find work in advance for prisoners about to be paroled or discharged. Prisoners pay one dollar a year for membership, including the services of the employment bureau. One of the best ways of helping a prisoner is to enroll him as a member. The address of the treasurer of THE HUMANITARIANS is *Mr. E. C. Landis, Box 2, Lansing, Kansas;* to whom remittances should be sent. Enrollment blanks can be obtained from us.

We have a small separate fund for helping our prisoner members to a job, with the aid of THE HUMANITARIANS, to which we invite contributions of a dollar or more, and which is paid over to THE HUMANITARIANS as occasion demands, without deduction for expenses. As this work is separate from our own we ask those who contribute, or who send us money to be forwarded, to enclose extra postage if they require an acknowledgment. All such remittances are recorded on our books, but we have to spare ourselves the cost of additional correspondence as far as possible.

Capital Punishment has been abolished in Arizona by a majority vote of 132, and booze by a majority of nearly 12,000. Good, but we regret to learn that Governor Hunt, the pioneer prison reformer of Arizona, has been defeated by a majority of 32.

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I Say "Amen" To This

The following is quoted from a letter just received from a prisoner, and I hope it will be taken to heart by some of our members who, having offered to write to a prisoner, and who, after we have sent a name, simply neglect to do so, without notifying us and giving us the chance to make other arrangements for him. No one is compelled to continue in this work; there are many reasons why one may not find it possible, convenient or agreeable, and for such I have no criticism. But I fail to find words adequate to express the state of mind of those who are willing to leave an unfortunate man in a state of suspense, often causing him the keenest suffering, to say nothing of loss of faith in humanity. To say the least, it indicates a lack of the fundamental instincts of a lady or gentleman, to say nothing of a Christian.

"The fact that I have no correspondent is largely due to the inconsiderateness of the correspondent selected by you. I made an honest effort to respond to such letters—very few, by the way—as she saw fit to write. However, I fully recognize that you, personally, are not responsible for neglect on the part of a correspondent.

"I fail to find an adequate excuse for a person who, knowing the nature of the work you have so unselfishly undertaken, reflects discredit upon such organization. Possibly a morbid curiosity incites them in desiring to write to us of "the Submerged Tenth." Did they, however, know the discouragement their inconsiderateness occasions, perhaps they would refrain from satisfying such curiosity at the expense of those of the unfortunates who, unable to defend themselves, are of necessity compelled to bear in silence such untoward acts as their supposed friends(?)—by the way a much abused term—may see fit to perpetrate."

Members are earnestly requested to return to us as promptly as possible the prisoners' letters which we send them.

To the O. E. Library League, ***Date*** .....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK.....

for .....

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$5.00	50 cts.
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Clerical Help Wanted

The LEAGUE desires to secure the voluntary aid of three or four of its members who are good typists, who will help by writing form letters in connection with prison work. It is not intended to ask an amount of work which will interfere with other duties, but only such are desired as will guarantee to do what they undertake systematically and promptly, as its nature is such that it does not admit of postponement. Those living within a day's mailing distance of Washington are preferred, but we should be pleased to have one up to as far west as Kansas. We supply all stationery and, if desired, pay the postage for mailing.

Answers To Correspondents—By Our Goat

Mr. P. M., No. 5678, ——— Penitentiary.—Your request for an additional correspondent is received; likewise a letter from your present correspondent informing us of your requisition for a fountain pen, a meerschaum pipe, a set of victrola records and a check for $100 to pay a "lawyer." We think it would be very nice for you to have these things, also a dress suit to wear at the warden's receptions and an automobile to run about the prison yard. But we suggest that you apply to the nearest associated charities, and if they will not accede to your very reasonable requests, that you try the Rockefeller Foundation or the President of the United States. We think there is no longer room for you in our humble boat, and have accordingly spilled you overboard.

Miss Roberta T. C.—No, don't send your photograph unless you are horribly ugly. If you do this, you have no one to blame but yourself if the acknowledgment is couched in endearing terms. Among many people an exchange of photographs is regarded as indicating a very advanced degree of intimacy. And don't be silly enough to address your prisoner by his first name unless you expect the same in return. It is quite natural that your correspondent should want to know how you look. But if you want to address him by his first name for God's sake tell him at the same time that you are a grandmother. In short, observe the usual conventionalities yourself, if you expect not to be misunderstood. Don't think that because a man is behind a thirty foot wall, you must address him as you would your butler.

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indicated or marked in them, but five cents a week each must be paid for all time in excess of two weeks. Borrowers may specify "reduced copies if available."

Second-hand theosophical, occult and new thought books sold, bought, or taken in exchange or for credit by arrangement.

Collins, Mabel (*continued from last* CRITIC)—

A Cry From Afar, to Students of Light on the Path, $0.40.

Fragments of Thought and Life, $0.75.

The Idyll of the White Lotus, $1.00.

Adventures of a youth among the occult priesthood of ancient Egypt. One of the most valuable of Mabel Collins' books.

Illusions, $0.60.

Light on the Path, with Comments, and an Essay on Karma, cloth, $0.50; leather, sold only, $0.75.

"A treatise written for the personal use of those who are ignorant of the Eastern wisdom, and who desire to enter within its influence. Written down by M. C." A book which should be read every day, but which can be fully understood only by those who live its teachings. Said to have been communicated by a Master.

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

PENOLOGY AS A SACRED SCIENCE

The proper study of mankind is man.
—Pope; Essay on Man

It is not so many years since the furniture of our higher educational institutions consisted mainly of chairs of the antique variety, chairs of history, of dead languages, of ancient literature, of the theology of the Hebrews, and other subjects relating to the ancestors, and when it could be said of them that while they accepted the above dictum of Pope, they limited it to the study of man as he was, not as he is or is to be. To be looking backward, never forward, was the chief test of a sound education. True, there were annexes devoted to law, medicine and divinity—a concession to the fact that one must eat, be well and kept out of hell—and some attention was paid to philosophy, chiefly the opinions of great thinkers who evolved a universe out of their brains, while caring little and knowing less of the actual facts of nature. I am not one of the ancients, but I remember well when the teaching of the physical sciences was barely tolerated among the educationally elite, and when the professor of physics, of chemistry, of biology, as well as he who had secured a degree in the "sciences" rather than in the "arts" was looked on as a distinctly inferior sort of being. And as for technology, that is to say, applied science, well, that was regarded as beneath contempt and was relegated to separate schools. To earn one's living by one's knowledge, except teaching it to others, was to place oneself in the same category with common tradesmen. The establishment of chairs of applied science in the regular universities was actually fought by the woodenheads who talked of the prostitution of knowledge to practical ends. It was my personal experience as responsible head of an important section in one of our largest universities that my request for the addition to the library of a single standard text book of applied chemistry (worth about three dollars) was curtly refused on the ground that the institution had nothing to do with applying the knowledge it imparted, and that the presence of such a volume in the library might poison the minds of the young students with the notion that chemistry had any value other than for its

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own sake. I was not even allowed to donate the book at my own expense.

The term "sacred science" has been monopolized by theology, and to apply it to the treatment of criminals may seem to most of us somewhat bizarre. It was suggested to me by one of our prison inmates. But was he not right? Hell, what it is, how it is run, how to keep out of it, what you do when there, these have always been favorite themes of the sacred science of theology. The parallel is complete; the prison is a miniature hell; the officials, under the old system, were the counterparts of the gentlemen presiding over the God-established institution. If Satan, sin and future punishment are sacred subjects, why not penology? And if the redemption of the soul from future punishment is sacred, why not that science which deals with present redemption? Does not the infinite future begin with the *Now?* And is it not appropriate that our universities should divert a fraction of the time and money spent on the study of the afterdeath to considering immediate conditions? Curiously, while the old education subordinated the present to the past, in such matters it neglected the present for the future.

It is stated by a statistician that crime costs this nation six billion dollars a year, including the costs of police, courts, prisons and losses through criminal agencies. Whether it is six hundred million or six thousand million it is a clear proof that the subject is worthy of much more attention from a scientific standpoint than is being given to it. It is also stated that about forty per cent of those who are discharged from prison return thither. These facts should in themselves be sufficient to prove that there is something rotten in our present methods.

How are our prisons conducted at present? What is the training of the officials in charge of them? The staff of the average prison consists of the warden and his deputy, of the physician, one or two chaplains, and various minor officials. The warden and deputy are men who have been appointed either for political reasons or because of their success in handling this work in a rule-of-thumb fashion. In no case have they had a training which can in any sense be compared with that demanded of the men standing in the same relation to a hospital, a university or even an efficiently conducted factory of the higher type. The physician has had the training of a general practitioner, but seldom that involving questions connected with prisons, such as sanitation, dietetics—that is, how to get the best results on soup and bread—abnormal psychology and the relations of physical condition to crime. The chaplains, with some exceptions, are doubtless good men, with the interests of the prisoners at heart, but they too have had no special training for their work. Above the prison officials is a state superintendent, or a prison commission of whom the same may be said and who have

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been appointed for reasons known only to God and the Governor. The same applies to the responsible heads of the police department and often to the judges and attorneys, whose training is one-sided, while as for the juries, one knows that their chief qualification is ignorance. No one who has studied Gross's classical work on Criminal Psychology can fail to see that the average juryman is about as much out of place in weighing evidence as he would be in deciding on the value of a smokeless powder.

The remedy lies in part at least in the establishment of a department of penology in some of our leading universities. Only in this way can the requisite number of suitably trained persons be obtained. The subject is a complex one and could not be handled by one individual; it demands expert knowledge of a variety of widely different subjects. The term penology is used for convenience, but includes criminology. Perhaps the word "criminalistics" would be better. Here are some of the subjects included:

The study of the criminal as a type.

Domestic, social and industrial conditions leading to crime.

Physiological and pathological conditions leading to crime.

Alcoholism and the drug habit as factors.

Crime and heredity.

Ethical codes of criminals. Unbiased comparison of the motives of criminals and non-criminals.

Criminal law and procedure. Evidence. The jury system. The public defender.

Detection of crime.

Normal and abnormal psychology. The psychopathic clinic.

The police and their methods, actual and ideal.

Juvenile courts. Probation. Parole. Indeterminate sentence.

History of penal systems.

Present prison systems, including receiving stations, reformatories, jails, workhouses, penitentiaries, penal colonies, prison farms, the cottage system.

Foreign penal systems.

Honor systems and self-governing systems.

Capital punishment and life sentence.

Prison construction. Cell and dormitory systems.

Sanitary matters relating to the housing, feeding and care of the health of prisoners. Medical practice as related to prisons. Recreation and physical exercise.

Discipline and punishment. Control of intercourse with the public, through the mails or visits.

Aspects of prison labor and idleness. Industries which can be economically established in prisons. The disposal of the products. Relations of prison labor to free labor. Paid prison labor *vs.* prison slave labor.

Co-ordination of penal institutions for educational and technical efficiency.

Status of the families of convicts.

The education of the convict, both elementary and technical, with a view to his reclamation. The prison as a school for crime. Mental and moral effects of isolation.

Religious training of prisoners.

Prisoners' Aid Societies and other methods for providing them with employment after discharge.

Training of practical workers, scientific investigators and public lecturers and instructors.

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This list is of course by no means exhaustive, but it suffices to show that preparation for really efficient service is a matter of much complexity and that there must be considerable specialization.

The establishment of such a program would not mean building up *de novo*. Most of our large universities already contain the material for much of the work, especially as regards the scientific adjuncts as distinguished from criminology and penology proper. These would have to be co-ordinated with a view to their application in a course of penology. So far practically no effort has been made to do this. Columbia University, in the City of New York, has made a beginning by offering a course on "practical penal problems" which has as yet not gotten beyond the extension system, a sort of supplementary course for "afternoon, evening and Saturday classes," and running through one term with a single instructor, Dr. Whitin. Here is the program:

"The course deals with the application of the scientific method to the penal problem, the economic interpretation of the present penal institution, the legal status of the prisoner, administrative control, the indeterminate sentence, the receiving station, the farm-industrial prison, the employment of ex-prisoners, private agencies, capital punishment, the local jail, preventive measures and the juvenile institution, self-government *vs.* 'the honor system,' possibilities in social reconstruction."

This is altogether a very good program, but even as it stands entirely too large for one instructor to handle fully.

Into every legislature, to say nothing of Congress, there are introduced each year bills bearing on some aspects of the penal problem which are both fathered and passed on by men whose knowledge of the subjects involved is extremely limited, and which cannot be intelligently discussed for the want of proper information and trained advisors. Expensive experiments are undertaken, measures disastrous to the welfare of the inmates and reacting seriously on the community are proposed, when the aid of suitably trained persons would save both the inmate and the public.

In these days no science can be regarded as cut and dried. Progress is made by research, by experiment. This is quite as true in penology as in chemistry. This points to the introduction of methods and materials of investigation. Every court and every prison presents a large mass of material which can be utilized. Just as the medical school has the hospital and clinic so would the department of penology have the courts, the prisons.

There is no reason why penology should not presently offer a good career. There are as many jails and prisons as colleges. It is inconceivable that the present haphazard methods shall continue to be tolerated and that these institutions should be run indefinitely by men who have no co-ordinated knowledge of their business and who are often nothing but hirelings. Sooner or later the present officials will be replaced by scientifically trained men who can see beyond the one point—suppression, and who will be appointed for

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their knowledge, not just for their ability to use the mailed fist. They will be university graduates, appointed to minor positions at first, no doubt, but gradually working their way up. The prison commissions will be composed of experts; the wardens will be men who are able to see the subject from a broad standpoint; the physicians will be men specially trained for the work they have to do.

Nor will the profession be closed to women. As everybody knows, women have achieved great success as probation officers, especially among youthful delinquents. There are women's prisons, and women's departments in prisons. I believe, too, that part of the domestic work in men's prisons could best be directed by women.

The establishment of a department of penology is not a matter of sentiment or principle alone. It is a matter of dollars and cents; it is a matter of introducing methods of prevention and of efficiency which will save the community on its tax bills. Many of our states have universities which are in part supported by the public treasury, and diversion of some of the public funds now used for suppression into channels of prevention, of cure and of research would be a long step in advance. It is not enough that those who have to handle these problems, no matter how capable, should be left to pick up their information in a haphazard way as at present. While local conditions are not always propitious, several of our large universities are located within easy distance of the state penitentiaries, while every city of size has abundant clinical material in its slums, its jails, its courts, for at least a part of the work. Columbia University has made a good beginning, which it is to be hoped will grow, until penology has come to be recognized as an essential part of the training of everyone who has responsible relations to delinquents.

A Christmas Greeting

[The Editor is far too modest to claim more than a very small share in the great work which is being done for prisoners and prison reform. He publishes the following Christmas Greeting, so that is may be shared by his many faithful fellow members of the LEAGUE, to whom the credit is due in much greater measure than to himself, and with the hope that it will spur them to fresh efforts and interest others to go and do likewise.—*The Editor.*]

Represa, Calif., Dec. 19, 1916.

Dear Doctor Stokes:

We, the members of the Folsom Prison Theosophical Study Class, desire to express to you herein our appreciation and thanks for your tireless efforts in working for the cause of fallen humanity.

A few years ago the man behind the prison walls was looked upon as a parasite, a useless kind of animal that Society must rid herself of even at the cost of paying unnecessary taxes to keep him behind prison bars. Few, if any, cared or even thought about the redemption of the offender. All they desired was to put the criminal away for long years, and prided themselves on being so easily rid of all derelicts.

Today, all this is changed. A great many people are not only striving to reform or reclaim the prisoner, but are opening up avenues hitherto un-

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heard of whereby the man behind the bars can, if he chooses, change his career and take his rightful place among the respectable element of society by becoming a law abiding, useful citizen. Thousands of men and women, who are themeselves in the front ranks of the best society, are going to the trouble to try to help the man in prison by corresponding with him by letter. Instead of condemnation, they offer him all the encouragement they can to become a good citizen, and many may even offer the means for this attainment.

Again, schools have been started in nearly every prison in the United States. The prisoner has at last the opportunity to acquire an education along lines that will enable him to live by this some prison-acquired knowledge, and live honestly as well as independently.

What has brought about this great change in the treatment of criminals? Who brought society to the realization that every man confined in prison could be reclaimed by society if she would extend and give him the chance?

A few years ago, a little publication began to appear in the various prisons of the country, advocating the cause of the man in prison, and offering to provide any prisoner desirous of changing his career not only a chance to do so, but would further provide him with a correspondent who would gladly help him to something better in life than he had hitherto known.

Dr. Stokes, the little publication that has accomplished all this is the CRITIC, edited and published by yourself. You have not only been instrumental in bringing thousands of so-called hopeless derelicts to try to change themselves for the better; you have reformed society as well, for, not until your little publication came and pointed out the way, did they even think of reaching the prisoner by correspondence.

For years you have fearlessly defended the right of the prisoner to be given at least a chance to do better. And we, who are at present struggling along the difficult path that leads to enlightenment and truth, desire to express in some measure through this poor instrument our gratitude for the great good you have accomplished, and for the chance that has been granted to us through your untiring efforts in our behalf. We wish you a Merry Christmas, and trust that no shadow may ever cross your path to mar even for one moment your happiness through all the countless ages of the future. We are

Yours very respectfully,
Members of the Theosophical Study Class,
(per C———)

The Dog In The Manger

We understand that certain prisons either refuse to allow their inmates to become members of THE HUMANITARIANS, or at least place obstacles in the way of their doing so. We do not name these institutions because we do not wish to hold the officials up to public contempt. Whatever may be said of rules and discipline, it is certainly one of the first duties the officials owe to the public to extend every facility to inmates to secure work in advance of discharge. In some cases we are informed that the prisons have employment agencies of their own and object to competition. Nobody can possibly object to each prison providing for its outgoing men, and in fact, it should be the duty of the State to do so. But there cannot possibly be too much competition. The greater the number of channels through which they can hook on to a job the better

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for everybody concerned. One may lend special support to one or the other of these, as its method appeal the most to him. But to place obstacles in the way of the others, or to speak disparagingly of them and block their work, indicates that it is something else than the welfare of the prisoner that he is after. Whatever object a prison official may have in trying to trip up the work of such organizations, he loudly proclaims one thing, that he is not fit for his place, because he is blocking the efforts of the public to protect itself against recidivism. There cannot possibly be too many openings, and no prisoner should be restrained from trying as many as he can. A well-known prisoners' aid society, the Central Howard Association of Chicago, states that it costs on an average $6.62 to place a discharged prisoner. $6.62, man! Why then do you object to the single dollar asked by THE HUMANITARIANS for doing it? Broaden your viewpoint and see that the important thing is that work shall be found, not that you rather than someone else shall secure it.

A Fable From Aesop

A dog made his bed in a Manger, and lay snarling and growling to keep the Horses from their provender. "See," said one of them, "what a miserable cur! who neither can eat corn himself, nor will allow those to eat it who can."

Moral—The writer of this Fable, who lived in the sixth century B. C., may have had in mind certain Prison Officials of those days who, unable to secure work for outgoing inmates, refused to allow others to do so who could. History repeats itself.

Answers To Correspondents—By Our Goat

Mrs. T. T. M.—It is quite true that the LEAGUE requires the payment of thirty-five cents; it is also true, as you say, that this is "a large sum of money to charge for the privilege of writing to a prisoner." The privilege may not be worth that to you. But the fact is, dear madam, that it costs us much more than this to get the name of the prisoner, to say nothing of maintaining an office and a corps of stenographers whose time is largely taken up by answering fool questions from people who ought to know better than to ask them. When your church ceases to charge you five or ten or fifty dollars a year for a seat at the Gospel feast every Sunday, then you can kick about thirty-five cents paid for a chair at the table of Service.

Mrs. Q. E. D.—One must fully agree with your contempt for those who think that they are practising brotherhood when they are just getting together and generating "thought forms." But when you end your letter by telling me how much you admire the LEAGUE, and how your whole soul is with it, but that you really can't contribute ten cents towards its support, one wonders whether the "thought form" mania of which you speak is not contagious—and that you have caught it!

Mr. M. Asher, No. 9012, ——— Prison.—No, no more correspondents for you from this quarter. Your last letter to your present correspondent has been sent to us for an opinion as to whether you are of sound mind or not. I don't know, but I advise that you keep your honey for home consumption. I suggest that you address the editor of that nice paper, *Sweethearts for All.*

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It is reported that Thomas Mott Osborne has been repeating his Auburn experience by "doing" two weeks at the naval prison at Portsmouth, N. H. Why not try Waupun next?

The appointment of William H. Moyer, one time Warden of the Federal Penitentiary at Atlanta, as Warden of Sing Sing, calls to our mind that remark about "the stone which the builders rejected."

Correspondents Wanted for illiterate prisoners, for colored prisoners, for musical prisoners.

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Dunlop, D. N.—The Path of Attainment, $1.00.

Edger, Lilian—Elements of Theosophy, $0.75.

Gleanings from *Light on the Path*, $0.75.

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A valuable collection of articles reprinted from the first five volumes of *The Theosophist*. Throws much light on "The Masters."

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Gardner, E. L.—The Fourth Creative Hierarchy, paper, $0.40.

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An occult life of Christ.

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Scientific Romances, 2 vols., each, $1.75.

Hints on Esoteric Theosophy, $0.75.

Hoult, Powis—A Dictionary of Some Theosophical Terms, $1.75.

The best theosophical and occult dictionary, containing about 2,700 definitions, covering all fields of occultism.

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INCAPABLE OF TEARS

Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness. Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters, it must have lost the power to wound. Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.

—*Light on the Path*

It has been said by an eminent scientist that all the workings of the universe might be expressed in a single mathematical equation from which, by substituting the proper values for x, y, z, might be deduced every fact of the past and present, and from which the future might be predicted with the accuracy with which the astronomer forecasts the moment of an eclipse a century hence, and this down to the minutest detail.

This is but another way of asserting the existence of one universal law including all phenomena; it assumes that the Absolute works by fixed, not by arbitrary methods. Such a law might apply to the spiritual as well as to the physical world, and quite likely the same fundamental equation covers both. There is an ancient saying, attributed to Hermes, "As above, so below." This means nothing other than that the same mathematical expression applies to the invisible and the visible worlds. Far from being unscientific, a relic of ancient superstition, this is a concise statement of the idea of universal law which modern science claims as its discovery. You have doubtless often been struck with the parallelisms existing between physical and the moral, between social and physiological phenomena, between the law of gravitation and the law of Karma, between the physical and the spiritual eye or ear, between the freezing of the milk in your pitcher and the freezing of the milk of human kindness. Language is full of metaphors, in which physical terms are used in mental or moral senses, or the reverse. Why is this? Simply because there is an unconscious recognition of the fact that the same fundamental equation applies in both cases—use the physical x and you get a physical expression; use a spiritual x and you get a spiritual interpretation. The use of metaphor is an application of the dictum of Hermes—"As above, so below."

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Many of the sayings of the world's greatest teachers are the verbal expressions of moral equations. To you they may mean one thing, to me another, not because they are ambiguous, but because you have one value for x while I have another. Each substitutes his own value for x, and gets a solution equally true in both cases, while if an impossible value is inserted the equation works out to an imaginary quantity, an absurdity. As well charge the algebraic equation $x+y=a$ with vagueness or absurdity as to say that because one sees one thing and another something else in a moral aphorism, therefore the aphorism is necessarily absurd or vague.

The paragraph which I have quoted from *Light on the Path* has much of this quality. Different commentators have given different interpretations and possibly all are right. The term "Master" as used here, is usually given a certain meaning which will be recognized by students of that famous little book. But it may mean any Master, no matter in what province of skill or achievement. To *stand* in the presence of the Master means that you are in a position to meet the Master, not necessarily on terms of equality, but at least with such knowledge, training and power that you can in a measure see things through his eyes, feel as he feels, act as he can act and would have you act. If you have prepared yourself in chemistry, if you know something of its laws and have practiced in the laboratory, then you can stand in the presence of the Master of Chemistry as a student or disciple—otherwise your status is precisely that of the laboratory cat, nothing more. If you are a civilian, you are as nothing to the general—only your training as a soldier can entitle you to recognition. And if you aspire to be one of the workers for the good of the world, you must have acquired some of the discipline necessary for you to receive the recognition of those higher beings who have this aim in view, call them saviors, saints, mahatmas or what you will. To be able to stand in the presence of the Master means to be possessed in a measure of his qualities, to see things from his standpoint, to have gone through some of the discipline he has gone through, and to have so built it into yourself that you have some of his power, be what it may. They are hugely practical beings, these Masters, and mere talk, the mere thought that you would like to have their recognition, amounts to nothing. The pity is so many imagine it does.

In these words, as elsewhere, *Light on the Path* states some of the qualities you must have before you are worthy of recognition. One of the first of these is the conquest of emotionalism. It is almost superfluous to say that he who would be a surgeon, or even a nurse, who would stand in the presence of a master of surgery, must not let his emotions get the better of him. To do this, to shed tears over suffering, to faint at the sight of blood, to shudder on hearing the groans of pain, these are not the qualities of either a trained nurse or a surgeon. What is needed is the requisite skill, a thorough grasp

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of the situation, a keen interest in the welfare of the patient, but no needless sentiment or sensitiveness, which merely cloud the better judgment. The surgeon does not raise questions about suffering, he is not pained or sickened at the sight of blood; he has but one idea, the future welfare of his patient.

Entirely the same holds when the x is, instead of a surgeon, one of the great beings recognized as saviors, saints, elder brothers. This is what is meant by saying that "Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness." We are prone to delude ourselves on the matter of sensitiveness. It is a common notion that sensitiveness is a sign of development and that development in a spiritual sense is favored by it. I constantly meet people who think that ability to weep over the misfortunes of others, to experience a sense of shock or repugnance at vice, is a sign of superiority. Cut out that notion; it is not, no more than are sentimentality or disgust at a cancer signs of superiority in a surgeon. There is nothing more laudable or heroic in weeping over the troubles of others than in howling over your own. Of what earthly use are such sentiments? If you have them, they simply throw on you the responsibility of trying to remedy the conditions, and reprobation if you do not take steps to that end, while, if you are really taking such steps, if you are where you can stand in the presence of the Master, you have no need for them and they are but hindrances. Keen spiritual perception and sympathy are to be sharply distinguished from sensitiveness.

I have heard of people making great claims as teachers who would not take your hand unless they wore gloves, for fear of contaminating their "magnetism" with yours, whatever that may mean. If so, it is a sign of weakness, not of development. We talk of founding communities or colonies where we can go apart from the world and raise our spurious hothouse spirituality. Pay no attention to such leaders if you aim to cultivate those qualities which will enable you to stand in the presence of the Masters. Reserve some time each day when you can go apart into your closet; but as for the rest, go down into the world and help it to fight its battles—the soldier must not be afraid of blood.

It is sometimes said or implied that if a great Being were to come to earth, he would be so sensitive that he would be in some way injured or at least pained by the vile things he might see, that he could not work under such conditions. Not so. Is it to be supposed that he, or any one who may come with the object of help, will be so poorly equipped for his work that he will be thrown off his balance by the very things which it is his aim to remedy? What reception shall we give him? Shall we put him up in the best lodgings, feed him on the choicest food and keep him in the best society lest he be contaminated? Far from it. Get together the spiritually halt, maimed and blind, the low and mean off-scourings

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of humanity; feed him on the food that the poor are compelled to eat; take him to the slums, the prisons, the saloons, the brothels; introduce him to those legislative halls where corruption is rampant. If you would stand in the presence of the Master you must yourself have conquered those weaknesses which he has conquered, instead of assuming that he possesses yours.

"Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters, it must have lost the power to wound." It is somewhat easy but wholly insufficient that you attain to an abstract realization of this and the preceding rules—anybody with some intelligence can do it. It is easy enough to have charitable feelings towards those who offend others, whether in minor matters or by an offense against the law —let us say the criminal. But you must be put to the test of having the insult, the assault, the theft, or what not, directed against yourself. It is an absurdly simple and easy matter to pray for those who despitefully use and persecute others and to find excuses for them. You must do it for those who treat you thus. "Ay, there's the rub." Can you do it? Only when you both can and do do so are you able to stand in the presence of the Master.

One of the great attributes of the Master is to see things in their true relation. But it is much more; it is the acting on that perception. What do I mean by true relation? I mean just what you mean when you speak of going to a height to get a bird's eye view of the land. This is often not impossible for the chamber—or lodge room—philosopher. But the quality of the Master is to see things from the height while in reality being in their midst.

It is stated elsewhere in *Light on the Path* that "Before you can attain knowledge, you must have passed through all places, foul and clean alike." This is intimately connected with the statement that "Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart." The only school which prepares one to stand in the presence of the Master is the school of experience—and bitter experience. Before you can understand the problems with which the Master has to deal you must not only have sinned, but have suffered otherwise than as a result of sin. Disappointments, loss of friends, calumny, persecution, even physical suffering, these are the things which help you to see through the eyes of the Master. Even he has passed through all places, foul and clean alike; even his feet have been washed in the blood of the heart. Much has been written on the subject of redemption through blood. It is the blood of your own heart, not that of another, which saves you.

"He who regards impartially lovers, friends and foes, strangers, neutrals, foreigners and relatives, also the righteous and unrighteous, he excelleth." So saith the Bhagavad Gita. It has often enough been called the creed of indifference. It is no such thing; it is the creed of poise.

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The practical meaning of these rules is poise and self-control. How to acquire them? Certainly not by meditation, though this is useful—it shows you the way. Actual contact with the world and its problems and temptations, actual experience of its sufferings, these alone can qualify the disciple to become as his Master, to stand in his presence.

There are two aphorisms in *Light on the Path* which state:

"Learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men."

"Regard most earnestly your own heart."

When you learn to do these you will see that they are one and the same; you will be on the way to killing out the sense of separateness; you will realize that all men are your brothers. As you know, I lay much importance on prison correspondence. I do this not only because it opens to you the way to help others by placing better ideals before them, by encouraging and perhaps cheering them. There is a deeper reason. It affords you one of the best means of looking intelligently into the hearts of men, and of looking into your own. "Speech comes with knowledge; attain to knowledge and you will attain to speech." Where am I to get the knowledge? Nowhere better than by looking intelligently into the hearts of men. He who would save men must know men; he who would talk about reforming the convict must know the convict.

No matter what your duties, no matter what you contribute to the relief of the poor by giving money, getting up charitable bridge parties and balls, attending meetings for philanthropic purposes, agitating for reforms, spend a portion of your time in getting into direct contact with the individuals for whom you are otherwise working indirectly. It is something which you cannot advantageously delegate to others. You cannot study medicine without the dissecting room and the clinic; you can never become a chemist without learning it in the laboratory, or a geologist without going into the field; yet you claim to be able to talk rationally on such a subject as prison reform and the reform of prisoners when the prisoner is something as far removed from your actual experience as are the beasts in the heart of Africa. Philanthropy is as much a laboratory science, a science of observation and experiment as is any of the physical sciences, and all the passing of resolutions and organizing of committees by women's clubs will never make it anything else.

The entire Christmas edition of The Star of Hope (Sing Sing) was destroyed by order of Superintendent Carter—it is said—because it contained a criticism of Gov. Whitman. Hereafter Mr. Carter will censor all prison publications within his jurisdiction and limit them strictly to soft soap. Fortunately there are still a few editors left who are not in prison and who can and will say what they think about prison administration. We don't need *The Star of Hope* to tell us what we already know and can't help seeing.

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To Our Prison Workers

I recommend you to provide yourselves with a copy of the little book referred to elsewhere in this number of the CRITIC—*Light on the Path.* It will be of great help to you in seeing the real significance and value of your work, in which there is much more than appears at first sight. *Light on the Path* is not the property of any one sect, cult, creed or church; it contains nothing which can shake the faith of the believer in any religion; its principles are part of the principles of all religions and the exclusive property of none.

Copies cost 15c, 25c, 50c, 75c.

To Prisoners

I do not doubt that you have reasons for being suspicious of others. I do not doubt that you believe that the public is against you and would be glad to keep you where you are. Cut out that notion. There are plenty of earnest men and women in the outside world who are anxious to know you, to understand your difficulties and to help you.

But it is up to you in great measure. How can you expect the world to do anything for you if you do not yourself present your case? This is within your power—yes further, you owe it to yourselves, to your families and to your fellow inmates to enlighten the public. You can only do this—since you are not on the platform and have not the ear of the public—by enlightening individuals.

Do not imagine because you cannot write a good letter, because your spelling or your grammar or your penmanship is bad, that you cannot present yourself. That's where you are wrong. What people want to know is not about some ideal, educated, unjustly imprisoned convict. They want to know you just as you are. You owe this to the cause of prison betterment.

We give you the opportunity to do this. Send in your name to us; tells your age, your color, how long you have yet to serve, and if you wish, any other information, and we will see that you have a chance to write to some person who wants to know you. It will cost you nothing, not a red cent more than the postage stamp on your letter. Besides letters you will get the CRITIC. Now's the time to begin.

About Prisoners' Aid Associations

The CRITIC has given special publicity to THE HUMANITARIANS, partly because it believes in the basic principles on which this organization is founded, but also largely because it was asked to co-operate with it. At the same time it will gladly publish the names and addresses of any associations devoted to helping prisoners, when officially invited to do so. We know that some of these organizations have more applications than they can respond to and we hesitate to add to their burdens unless our co-operation is solicited.

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More Publicity

Members are earnestly urged to write to the newspapers soliciting correspondents for prisoners——not forgetting to give our address. We greatly need more workers.

Mr. Employer of Men!

Have you ever considered the thousands of men in prison as potential employes in your particular business establishment?

You know, of course, that accidents, or conditions over which they had no control, are responsible for the majority of the so-called criminals.

Would you like to help these men regain their former place in society when they have paid the law the exacted pound and are returned to society—to you——debtless, but also penniless, to begin the hard climb back up the ladder?

By helping these men you incidentally help yourself, for many able men are today in prison.

By rendering a humanitarian service you also make a first-rate investment.

If you are willing to employ men who are anxious to work, and who only ask a man's chance to do a man's work for a man's pay, *address Mr. E. C. Landis, Treasurer, The Humanitarians, Lansing, Kansas.* He can supply you with men in all walks of life from Executives to Common Laborers.

Inmates who do not get on satisfactorily with the correspondents assigned to them are earnestly invited to report to us. We will try again as often as may be necessary.

Correspondents who do not find the prisoners assigned to them satisfactory are urgently requested to report to us, with the reasons for the difficulty, when other names will be sent, or at least an effort made to remove the cause of the trouble.

Some Recent Additions

All for sale or loan.

Barker, Elsa—Songs of a Vagrom Angel, $1.05.

Bartlett, Harriet Tuttle—Esoteric Reading of Biblical Symbolism, $1.60.

Besant, Annie—India: a Nation, $0.30.

Theosophy and Life's Deeper Problems, $0.75.

Burnett, Mary Weeks—Principles of Occult Healing, $0.75.

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Jinarajadasa, C.—The Message of the Future, $0.75.

Theosophy and Modern Thought, $0.75.

Joire, Dr. Paul—Psychical and Supernormal Phenomena, their Observation and Experimentation, $3.50.

Lodge, Sir Oliver—Raymond; or Life and Death, $3.50.

Osborne, Thomas Mott—Society and Prisons, $1.45.

Pavitt, Thomas and *Kate*—Book of Talismans, Amulets and Zodiacal Gems, $2.75.

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Rogers, L. W.—Dreams and Premonitions, $0.50.
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Theosophy. Our new and revised list, free on request.
Old, W. Gorn—The Yoga of Yama (translation of the Katha-upanishad). $0.75.
Waite, A. E.—The Secret Doctrine in Israel, $3.50.
The Way of Divine Union, $2.50.
Wodehouse, E. A.—A World Expectant, $1.00.

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[List No. 2] Theosophy

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Jinarajadasa, C.—Christ and Buddha, cloth, $0.40.
Flowers and Gardens, cloth, $0.40.
How We Remember our Past Lives, $0.50.
In His Name, cloth, $0.40; leather, sold only, $0.75.
We rank this book with *At the Feet of the Master* as a practical guide.
I Promise; Talks to some Young Disciples, $0.50.
Theosophy and Modern Thought, $0.75.
What We Shall Teach, $0.40.
Johnson, Ethelbert—The Altar in the Wilderness, $0.50.
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Free from Sanskrit terms and suited to Western readers.
From the Upanishads (selections), cloth, $0.55; leather, sold only, $0.75.
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Parables of the Kingdom, paper sold only, $0.20.
Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, translation, $1.25.
With introduction and commentary. A classic on Raja Yoga.
The Song of Life, boards, sold only, $0.30.
Judge, William Q.—Bhagavad Gita, cloth, $0.50; leather, sold only, $0.75.
Culture of Concentration, paper, sold only, $0.10.
The Ocean of Theosophy, cloth, $0.75.
Students of W. Q. Judge will find his more important articles and letters reprinted in the monthly magazine, *Theosophy*, $2.00 a year.
Kawaguchi, S. E.—Three Years in Thibet, $3.00.
Kingsford, Dr. Anna B.—Dreams and Dream Stories, $1.50.
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Krishnamurti, J.—See *"Alcyone."*
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Leadbeater, C. W.—The Astral Plane, $0.35.
Manual No. 5. The Astral Plane, its Scenery, Inhabitants and Phenomena.

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CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND LIFE IMPRISONMENT

On just what grounds do we claim the right to deprive anyone of life or liberty? "Why," we say, "because he has broken the law." The law, what is that? Absolutely nothing but the formally expressed will of the majority, or of a minority having the powers of a majority, nothing more. The Constitution places certain restrictions on the law-making power, but within this limit, law is anything which the majority chooses to enact by virtue of the right of the strongest. It is admitted that no one may be executed or imprisoned except by due process of law, a valuable principle, no doubt, but meaning only this, that the right of the strongest must be exercised in a systematic fashion. It says nothing whatever about the ultimate justice of such procedure or such punishment.

What is justice? An abstract definition would be hard to find. But certainly it does not consist in impartial administration of the law. To maintain this is to assert that justice is impartial enforcement of the right of the strongest. Why do I have the same rights as yourself? Not because the law says so, but for a far deeper reason. The writers of the Declaration of Independence held it to be "self-evident," a sort of axiom, not capable of logical proof, but lying at the root of all reasoning and procedure. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," said John Hancock and his associates, "that all men are created equal: that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." It is not a question of expediency, it is not a question whether it suits society to allow these rights to the individual; they are something God-given and beyond the power of man to annul. If a definition of justice can be found anywhere, it lies in these sadly neglected words of the Declaration of Independence, in the conception that *all* men are endowed with certain *inalienable* rights, quite above the power of the law, that is, of the majority, to deprive them of.

Now, in fact, that very right which entitles us to live and to enjoy liberty belongs equally to the offender against the law. Under no circumstances does he through his act forfeit that right. The right remains, even though its exercise may be temporarily interfered with. The very utmost we can demand is that in the pursuit

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of his aims, the gratification of his impulses, he shall not unduly interfere with us; the utmost we can demand is restraint from interference with our liberties and our lives—not one iota more. The same principle which forbids the confiscation of a man's entire fortune, the infliction of cruel and exorbitant penalties for minor offenses, prohibits us from going beyond the point of self-defense; we cannot justly interfere with another man's rights beyond the minimum which guarantees us our own. The moment we transgress that minimum, we are the aggressor; we are putting ourselves in his place and are equally reprehensible, no matter whether the majority so rules or not. Doubtless there is a slightly developed state of society where summary methods must be used, but those conditions do not exist with us—our prisons are strongly built; there is nothing except the remote possibility of escape to prevent the unruly individual from being restrained as long as may be needful. But this does not deprive him of his right to liberty at the very first moment he can be trusted not to trample on the liberty of others.

We hear of severe and excessive penalties being inflicted in order to make "an example" of the offender, in order to deter others who shall see his punishment. The idea is fallacious. We have no right to inflict more than the needful minimum of restraint in order to influence others with whose actions the offender is in no way concerned and over whom he has no control. It is punishing one man for the prospective crime of another. We know the plan of getting together a group of innocent citizens and shooting every tenth man in order to discourage future disorder. Most of us have our opinion of those who pursue this policy. But it differs in no way from the principle followed in making "an example" of an offender; it differs in no way from the infliction of anything beyond the minimum penalty necessary to constitute effective restraint.

Capital punishment is a glaring example of what I have said. It is usually justified on the score of deterring others by example. Statistics prove that it does not so deter, because there are no more capital offenses where the death penalty has been abolished than where it still exists. But even if there were, it would be no justification. Bad as the murderer may be we have no right to do more than restrain him; we have no right to hold him responsible for similar future crimes on the part of others. It is a distinctly antisocial act, because it deprives its victim of the God-given right of life without accomplishing anything which could not be accomplished by restraint. It is therefore both cruel and excessive punishment and is in virtual violation of the eighth amendment to the Constitution. The writers of that amendment have skillfully dodged the question of death penalty by forbidding excessive fines and cruel punishments. The fine, even if not a monetary one, is excessive; it means taking absolutely all you can get.

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It is quite needless to refer to the fact that juries frequently makes mistakes, that no matter what the penalty it should have a string tied to it, should be one which admits of restoration to liberty should the verdict prove to be a mistaken one. It is quite needless to repeat the various arguments against capital punishment, such as breeding a contempt for life, the sending a sinner to his death with blood on his hands, and what not. All I wish to emphasize at this time is that it is not only cruel and excessive punishment, but that it is fundamentally opposed to the principles on which society and government are based, the right of each man to enjoy life; that it accomplishes nothing more than restraint by the usual methods would effect, and that in inflicting it, we ourselves become the criminals, the murderers.

Those who advocate substituting life imprisonment for the death penalty are those who believe in taking sixteen ounces of flesh instead of a pound. They have worked themselves into a furor over the barbarous method of "shedding blood," or whatever polite and parlor method of doing away with a man may stand in its place, but they entirely overlook the point that in the one case as well as in the other it is a question of whether the punishment is cruel and excessive.

The fact is, there is but little choice between the two methods, as far as morality is concerned. Between certain death a few months hence, and equally certain death at the end of a period of twenty or forty years of living death the choice is merely one of individual taste. It is quite true that there is a chance that the jury may have been mistaken and that the man may be innocent and may be able to prove it in time; it is quite true that no sentence should be imposed which cannot be recalled. But these are rare exceptions. When the judge sentences the man to prison for the rest of his natural life, he means just what he says and in general the penalty is strictly enforced.

The arguments on which it is proposed to substitute a life sentence, pronounced in advance, for the death penalty, are largely sentimental. If you consider the real aim of punishment, the protection of society by the restraint of the individual, if you remember that any sentence is cruel and excessive which inflicts a penalty beyond that point where the offender is given a reasonable chance to make good, and if you will consider the deteriorating influence of prison life, the deprivation of the inherent right to liberty, you will see that there is but small difference. The life is equally wrecked in either case. The imposition of a life sentence with no loophole such as is provided by a just parole law, assumes one of two things, either that the offender cannot by any possibility be safely given his freedom at a later time—or, that the God-given right which the Declaration of Independence speaks of is a farce, to be disregarded simply because it suits the public to do so.

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It cannot be denied that there are those who, usually for pathological reasons, are subject to moral blind staggers and can never be safely allowed at large. But why pronounce sentence in advance? Isn't it quite as absurd as it would be to sentence one to life imprisonment in a hospital? If the patient does not give evidence of recovery, is it not easy enough to keep him? If he does, is not further detention criminal?

Many a man outgrows in time the uncontrolled impulses of his youth, in fact most do, if given a fair chance. He who might commit an unpremeditated or even premeditated murder at twenty might be safe at forty. And consider too that not only are most unpremeditated murders the result of an impulsive nature which may in time be conquered, but they are frequently the result of accident. Two men get into a brawl. One strikes the other and gets a short term for assault. If, without the least intention on his part, he happens to hit a few inches to the right or left, above or below, and touches a vital spot, the man is killed and a life sentence, a ruined career, is the result. If the protection of society is the object, either confine all who cannot control their tempers, or recognize the fact that the punishment for an uncontrolled temper shall last only as long as there is actual danger from it.

I am not palliating murder, but I believe we have concentrated our wrath on one group of offenders to the exclusion of others equally culpable. I do not think it worse to kill one man stone dead than to indulge in the methods by which some good citizens, for their own profit, materially reduce the length of life of their employes, by insanitary shops, neglect of reasonable precautions for safety, employment of child labor, or what not. Is it really worse to kill one person outright than to cut ten per cent off the lives of hundreds, for one's personal benefit? If we attempted to punish these ten per cent murderers on the same principle which we apply to the one hundred per cent murderers there would not be prisons enough in the country to hold them and rapid-firing gallows would have to be invented to hang them all. We may not need less punishment, but we sorely need to have it spread out more evenly.

In recent years the Federal government and some of the states have applied the parole system to life prisoners. The parole limit differs greatly in different states. The Federal law makes a life prisoner eligible to parole at the end of fifteen years. A discussion of this would make a separate chapter. It may be pointed out, however, that the minimum of fifteen years is entirely too long. No single rule can cover all cases and the only remedy is the adoption of an indeterminate sentence with a possible minimum of relatively short duration. Except in those cases where there is mental abnormality which renders it unsafe for the individual to be at large at any time, it may be questioned whether long sentences do not do more harm than good. Two or three years out of an active life and of

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submission to the rigors of prison discipline ought to be enough to bring any relatively normal man to his senses. It will be the more likely, the more attention is paid to the development of the prison as a training school, in its various aspects. Set off against this the detrimental effects of isolation, the loss of individuality, of previously acquired skill, the disuse of faculties normally kept healthy by exercise, to say nothing of the endless opportunities which the prison affords as a school for crime and vice, and it is easy to see that society is using itself badly when it treats offenders thus and expects them to make good.

Whether or not we pray every morning and night to the Almighty to take good care of *us,* and to give *us* what we want, no one should omit repeating each day these words of the Declaration of Independence—"We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal: that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." For in these is the creed of a safe and sane humanity; on these—as Christ said of the rule, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself"—hang all the law and the prophets. And if we have a moment more we might add a prayer for the souls of those who, appointed by the people to see that justice is done, feel that they can consistently and honorably pass a sentence of death or of life imprisonment which they know is in violation of the very principles of justice for which they are supposed to stand.

To The Member Who Is "Much Interested"

Dear Friend:—I presume you have two or more prison correspondents. You are doing your best by your letters to lift them up from the depressing, stultifying, degrading, soul-killing influences which shut them in on every side. That is all right. It is just what you ought to do—just what you are capable of doing. Keep right on—don't let any misgivings weaken the good work which you are accomplishing for these miserable men. But don't forget that outside of these men are the inmates of all the other prisons in the country whom you cannot reach. You haven't time nor strength to do more than you are now doing. But surely you don't want that they shall never have what you are giving to your prisoners! Of course not! You are quite willing they should be helped. Who then is to attend to this important matter—much too great a burden for you to bear? Why, Dr. Stokes! that is what he is doing all the time. Certainly he is. But he cannot do it single-handed! He has got to be helped by us—the members of the LEAGUE—so that he can reach the men in all these other prisons in the country and supply them with faithful correspondents who will do for them what you are doing for your men. And to that end he must be enabled to keep the machinery of his office whizzing along every day, and not be obliged to discharge his clerks and give up the work for lack of means to continue it. And yet this is just what is going to happen if you and I and the other LEAGUE members do not take hold and give "a long pull, a strong pull and a pull altogether."

AN INTERESTED MEMBER.

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From A Prisoner's Letter

Just to show what it means for a man to receive a letter from where the sun shines: Ever since I have been here I noticed a man who never smiled and never spoke to anybody, and everybody called him "Nuts." About five or six weeks ago, after I delivered the letters to the cell house, I met him on the way and asked him what was the matter with him in a friendly way. He looked at me and said: "You don't know my troubles; you are delivering letters from outside to everybody but me, and you want me to be happy?" What could I do to make him happy? I wrote to Dr. Stokes for a correspondent for him, and ten days later he received a letter from the LEAGUE, and also one from a kind-hearted lady. I kept the printed letter and gave him the letter from the lady, and he was reading it all day, did not understand how anybody could write to him, and the next day he met me around the cell house and showed me his letter, and while I was reading I could see his color changing and he smiled. Then I explained to him, and I answered the letter for him, and he received a few more since, and believe me this poor human being is as happy today as a little child; his face looks brighter and we are the best of friends in here. Now judge for yourself how much we appreciate letters. This poor man has been here twelve years, all his friends have deserted him and I should say it is enough to drive anyone insane. He has about five more years to serve.

Why Kick The Humanitarians?

For the information of those interested I quote the following from a letter from the Secretary of THE HUMANITARIANS:

"We are glad to have the enclosed letter from . . . of the . . . State Prison.

" . . . is a member of THE HUMANITARIANS and since mailing him membership certificate with employment forms last September, we have heard nothing from him.

"It is unfortunate that some of the prisons appear not to mail to us the replies from our prison members. This results in the prisoner charging us with neglect.

"If it is possible it might set those men right if a brief notice were run in the next issue of the CRITIC. Would you favor us with this? Merely calling the attention of prisoners and citizens alike to the fact that undoubtedly letters written and turned in to the prison censor for mailing are not always sent.

"We receive now and then a letter of the tenor of friend . . . 's, but I am glad to say not often."

While the reception accorded to THE HUMANITARIANS on the part of the prison authorities has in general been most cordial, I regret to say that some evidences to the contrary have come to my attention. Add to this the imperfect handling of the mail which exists in some institutions—not always the fault of the officials—to say nothing of carelessness on the part of inmates themselves, and I think it evident that it would be acting too hastily on the part of either the prisoner or the public to charge THE HUMANITARIANS with delinquency in case of any hitch. I shall be glad to have any such cases reported to me by our prison members and will ask to have them investigated.

The Secretary desires me to state that it is practically impossible to obtain employment for outgoing prisoners on less than one

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month's notice. Inmates should keep this in mind and not put off sending in their applications till the last moment. A large fraction of outgoing inmates have the idea of getting employment with the Ford Automobile Works. I am authorized to say that the supply of labor offered to the Ford Company largely exceeds the demand and that it is absolutely useless for those who are not skilled automobile mechanics even to think of trying to get work with them.

More Publicity

Members are earnestly urged to write to the newspapers soliciting correspondents for prisoners—not forgetting to give our address. We greatly need more workers.

An Editor Who Succeeded

The editor of *The Square Deal,* the paper published in the Kansas State Penitentiary, was one of seventeen inmates who were granted a parole of ten days at Christmas. "Tex" overstayed his time thirty-six hours. He himself tells me that he had a hard fight to resist the temptation to make good his escape, but his sense of honor finally won; he wired the warden and reported to the police at Fort Worth, who, after investigating his story, petitioned the warden to restore "Tex" to his honor standing.

The newspapers, as usual, have made capital out of it and published stories which will not bear investigation. One prison paper printed an editorial under the title "An Editor Who Failed."

I consider "Tex's" action much more indicative of success than of failure. Parole rules must be obeyed to the letter and doubtless he will have to suffer for having violated them. But what is parole for, anyway, if it is not to prove what sort of stuff a man is made of? It is a much bigger thing to have hung fire for a day and a half and then to have won out in the face of probable disgrace, than to form endless good resolutions which are never put to the test, Better by far to turn up thirty-six hours late when one could have escaped than get back on the stroke of the clock when one is afraid of consequences. There is no disgrace in being tempted; the winning out is the thing, and that is what "Tex" did, and for it he deserves the respect of all right thinking people. Would those who criticize him have done as well, had they had the chance?

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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The O. E. Library League

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

HARDENED SINNERS AND HARDENED SAINTS

Ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

—Matt. xxiii, 23

Learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men.
Regard most earnestly your own heart.

—Light on the Path

It is a fact well known to those having to do with criminal statistics that the foundation of a criminal career is usually laid in youth, when the passions are hot and the powers of resistance are but little developed and when one has not acquired wisdom enough to see that conformity to the rules of society is the only safe way. In the period of what is known as sowing wild oats many of us come dangerously near to it. Sooner or later most of us reach a definite parting of the ways. At this point there are two sign-posts. One of these says "This Way to Becoming a Hardened Sinner," while the other bears the legend "This Road to Becoming a Hardened Saint."

And this reminds me of the two sign-boards which Alice saw in the land behind the looking-glass—"This Way to Tweedledum's House," and "This Way to the House of Tweedledee."

Now, don't slam down the paper and say that I claim that there is no choice between these roads. It would not be worth my while to prove that virtue is better than vice, for nobody denies it, at least on this side of the Atlantic. But we may overlook certain points of vital importance if we think that in the long run there is a huge difference between these paths. The fact is that apart from certain temporary advantages to the individual and to society, very good in their way, to be sure, both ways lead to pretty much the same place.

By a hardened sinner I mean one to whom anti-social actions have become easier than social ones, one who has acquired vicious habits. By a hardened saint I mean one to whom moral actions,

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or abstinence from immoral actions, have become a habit and to whom it is easier to be "good" than "bad."

Now a good habit is not to be laughed at simply because it is a habit, but from the ethical standpoint there is no more merit in doing what you can't comfortably help doing than there is in a good digestion. A good character, which is usually nothing more than a collection of virtuous habits backed by a conscience which makes one dreadfully uncomfortable if one goes wrong, is an excellent basis to build on, just as rock makes a better foundation than sand. But it is as easy to become the slave of good habits as of bad ones. Thrift, regular hours and a vegetarian diet are good haibts which may be carried to an excess. You have heard of the two Englishmen who were wrecked on a small island and who would not speak because they had not been formally introduced. The very existence of society as it now is assumes and depends on certain behavior, but conformity to these rules takes no account of certain very important matters. The hardened saint overlooks the fact that in refraining from anti-social actions, he is but backing up the present state of affairs; he is taking no account of progress.

Nobody, however, should fail to see that the present state of society is a transient one, that there are evolutionary forces at work which are quite beyond our control and which are constantly putting new problems and new conditions to the front. Just consider for example all the problems which have come from the discovery of a cheap fuel in coal and from the invention of the steam engine, with the consequent enormous development of industries and the growth of questions of labor and capital; think of the enormous slaughter now going on with the aid of the once trivial discovery of nitric acid. One might multiply examples indefinitely showing that there are forces at work which, if we are wise, we will take into account. The man of tomorrow, or a hundred years hence will be very different from the man of today; the saint of a hundred years hence will be a very different sort of saint from the saint of today. In an earlier stage of affairs many things which we regard as vices were accounted virtues, and they were really so because they tended to give stability to society as it was then. I have often called attention to the fact that what we call virtue and vice are very largely conformity or non-conformity to certain standards of temporary and passing value. Polygamy and indiscriminate sex relations for instance were once virtuous, when life had many risks and keeping the race alive had to be considered above all things. Even today, when the population is being slaughtered much faster than the normal birth rate replenishes it, we hear certain customs palliated which are usually accounted immoral. At a time when every man was ready to seize his neighbor's property, laws protecting property rights were regarded as even more important than life—men were

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hung for theft. Today our views are rapidly changing; it is ceasing to be moral to place the right of acquisition above everything else, and to whatever extreme we may go, it is quite obvious that the society of the future will hold very different views as to the right of the individual to acquire or hold property by means which act detrimentally on his fellows. Set your hardened saint of today down in the midst of society a thousand years hence and the probability is that he would be looked on as we look on the hardened sinner of today. Or put the hardened sinner of today back among the cave men and he would have passed as a first class saint.

The hardened saint is he who takes no account of progress, who assumes that the utmost that is required of him is conformity to the rule, law and custom of today, and who fails to keep himself in that flexible condition which admits of growth. While he may be a pillar of society as it is, he is often but a clog on its becomng what it should be. He is the conformist who, like the Pharisee of old, pays tithe of mint, anise and cummin, and omits the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith. And as such, while he is not the enemy of the society of today he is the enemy of the society of the future; he is as pernicious to posterity as the hardened sinner is to his contemporaries.

And further, the hardened saint is one who can look neither forward nor backward. He is often not only ready to persecute, yes, even to imprison or crucify the man of the future, but he accords the same treatment to the man of the past, the criminal who is out of tune with the present, but who is living according to the schedule of a previous age. He is the man who regards the sinner and the sin as something wholly abhorrent and worthy only of brutal suppression instead of rational cure. Intolerance, that is the vice of the hardened saint, the inability to see the root of good in things evil, the soul of manhood in the criminal, the truth which lies in the opinions of others with whom he may disagree. He is unable to look intelligently into the hearts of men and see the motives which influence them, and to compare them with his own.

If you want to see the difference between the ideal saint and the hardened saint you might compare the characters of Christ and of his contemporaries, the Pharisees. So far as observing the conventions of society, the laws of the land and of the church, small difference can be perceived. Probably the advantage lay on the side of the Pharisees. But Christ was the man of the future; he was the man who understood the shortcomings of the law and at the same time knew the possibilities lying dormant within the soul of the despised publican. And we find just the same thing today. One can hardly hope to be an ideal saint to the extent that Christ was, but he must steer clear of the opposite extreme; he must obey not the law only but the prophets likewise, otherwise he cannot hope to be more than a saint of the hardened variety.

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Beyond our present rules there is an infinite code of ethics of which we can get at most but slight gleams. It is the hardened saint who can perceive nothing at all. When Moses handed down the Ten Commandments he doubtless thought that he had touched the roof of moral attainment, that nothing more could be demanded of man. Christ summed them all, and more, in one sentence—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And elsewhere he added "Love your enemies." But even these are but a beginning. You must not only love your neighbor or your enemy—you must understand him—your love must not be perfunctory or condescending; it must be based on seeing that he is your brother, the replica of yourself.

There can be no doubt that the sign "This Road to Becoming a Hardened Saint" drives many to the opposite path. There is something as unlovely about the narrowness of the hardened saint as about the frankness of the hardened sinner, a sort of hypocrisy, a smell of pretensions not lived up to, which frightens the youth into the opposite course. Youth loves tolerance, it desires to be understood. But the virtuous yet intolerant parent or teacher, the man who preaches down, who claims that "he never did such things when he was young"—usually an out and out lie—tends to drive the youth upon the other road; I do not blame him. The hardened saint is a constant warning to others. One may have this or that theory as to Christ, but can any one overlook the splendid example of his associating with sinners, or the sentiment conveyed in the words "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone?"

How to keep from becoming a hardened saint? It is not an easy matter, especially if your position in life is such as to shield you from temptation, to make virtue profitable, to guard you from want. It is easy enough to think that you are doing enough when you walk straight, when you have no compelling motives to do otherwise. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Why? Not because there is any sin in being rich, but because heaven is a place for the ideal saint, not for one of the hard boiled variety. The thing for you to do is to get out somewhere where you will be tempted. Better slip up now and then than to lose your flexibility. Many a man accounted too bad to associate with has preserved his flexibility to a greater extent than those who have always walked straight—there is more hope for him.

How to scrape off the crust of hardened saintship which is beginning to accumulate on yourself? There are many ways, but all involve a broadening of your interests and your sympathies, especially of your sympathies. It may be well enough to have an academic interest in the other half of the world, the part in which you do not move socially or in a business way. But really, it is

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quite "insufficient." You must learn to know these men and women; you must learn to take a personal interest in them as you would in a member of your family or a friend who is "socially your equal." To read about them, to hear lectures, to sit in committees, to take part in charitable entertainments, these are well enough, but they carry you but a short way. I recommend correspondence with prisoners, not because it is inherently better than going into the slums, but because it brings you right into touch with those extremes on which society has set its seal of disapproval by shutting them away from the world. I am not engaging in guesswork when I say that if you enter this work in the right spirit, not with the desire to gratify a morbid curiosity or to parade your superior saintliness, not with the desire of preaching down, but with the serious wish to look earnestly into the hearts of men, you will find no better way. I am stating not only my own experience but that of many hundreds of my associates, that they are learning the lesson of their lives in understanding men, in growing tolerance, in removing the crust of hardened saintship. Christ did it; he was never tired of talking of associating with sinners and commending those who would do it. He knew what he was talking about; you do not have to take my word for it. And your reward will be, not in having performed an unpleasant duty, for it is not that, but in having your viewpoint broadened, in being placed on the firing line in the great battle on which the future of the race depends.

I often get complaints from those who have in a moment of enthusiasm undertaken to correspond with prisoners, that they have difficulty in finding anything in common. Some begin at the outset by objecting that they are asked to write to a foreigner, to a Jew, to a Catholic, or what not, or they demand educated prisoners, in order that they may have points of contact. I do not wish to be unreasonable—there must be something in common. But *look for it!* If you find it difficult, first ask yourself whether the fault lies in the fact that you have been hardened by your environment, that you yourself are lacking in the flexibility which is the basis of all spiritual progress. The difficulty should be a warning to you not to yield to a process that is slowly converting you into a hardened saint.

Soliciting Gifts

Members who are annoyed by their prison correspondents making persistent and unreasonable demands for supplies are urgently requested to report the same to us, with names and particulars. If necessary other prisoners will be substituted. No expenditures, other than minor ones, should be made without the endorsement of a responsible official, such as the warden, chaplain or physician.

Inmates who cause annoyance to their correspondents by making requisitions are notified that if complaint is made to us, they will be dropped from the list of members.

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A Model Introductory Letter To A Prisoner

Not a few of our new members find some difficulty in writing their first letter to a prisoner,—they do not know what to say to a stranger. By way of suggestion as to style we print, by permission, the following letter written by a new member to an inmate. Note that it is calculated to give the prisoner a very clear impression of the kind of person he is about to correspond with, and therefore constitutes a splendid introduction.

Your letter addressed to Dr. Stokes of THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE has been sent to me and I should be very glad indeed to correspond with you from time to time.

I am going to give you a little information in regard to myself so that you will know what kind of a man you are corresponding with in a small measure at least, and I hope that we will be able to write frankly back and forth.

I was forty-four years old on the 12th of last September; was born in a small country village of about 200 inhabitants in New Jersey called ———. I stayed there until I was about seven or eight years old and then we moved to ——— where my father was in the hotel and then in the coal business. I got most of my education at ——— School which is conducted by the Society of Friends, sometimes called "Quakers." At eighteen I started in business and have been with the ——— Company of ——— for over twenty-six years. I started as a boy in the office and about twelve or fifteen years ago was made General Manager of the Company. My end of the business takes care of the selling, of the buying and the advertising, but I have nothing to do—in detail at least—with the manufacturing or the financing of the business. We have a manufacturing plant in Philadelphia, one at Norristown, Pennsylvania, and branch stores in San Francisco, Savannah and Richmond. We do a business of somewhere between two and three million dollars a year.

In addition to my business interests, I am very much interested in the Young Men's Christian Association and Foreign Missions and other philanthropic and charitable work. I have a great many friends among the leading Christian men of the United States and enjoy their friendship very much.

I do not know at all what your problems are, and I do not know that I can be of any particular service to you, but I want you to feel that I am interested in you and want to be the kind of a friend that may be of some use and help to you.

I ought to tell you that I live in a suburb of ——— and live with my mother. She is a widow, my father having died last March. I have two brothers living and one sister—they are all married. I am a bachelor and, as stated before, live with my mother.

When you feel disposed to drop me a line, I should be very glad indeed to hear from you. I enclose a postage stamp and give my office address where I should be glad at any time to get a line from you.

With kind regards,

Membership In The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired.

Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

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Notice About Critic Subscriptions

Owing to the greatly increased cost of paper, envelopes and other items incidental to issuing the CRITIC, it will be impossible to be as lenient as heretofore in the matter of sending it to members or others who have not renewed their subscriptions.

Hereafter it will be necessary to drop from our roll those members who do not respond promptly to a notice that their subscription is due, and to assign other correspondents to their prisoners. While we have no right and no desire to interfere with correspondence between our prisoners and those who are not LEAGUE members, we can assume no responsibility for it and as far as we are concerned it cannot be recognized.

Prisoners' Aid Associations

Note—The CRITIC will be glad to publish every now and then the addresses of associations having for their object securing employment for prisoners, or aiding their families, provided they are not of purely local scope; also of local or state societies in states in whose prisons the LEAGUE is active. The wide circulation of the CRITIC in many prisons offers a good means of attracting the attention of inmates.

The O. E. Library League, H. N. Stokes, Librarian, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. National scope. Specialty, finding correspondents for prisoners. Membership, including receipt of the CRITIC, free to prisoners; for others, 10 cts registration and 25 cts a year for the CRITIC. Secures employment for its prison members through *The Humanitarians.*

The Humanitarians, Winston Salisbury, Secretary; E. C. Landis, Treasurer, Lansing, Kansas. National scope. Secures work in advance and furnishes transportation when necessary. Annual membership for the public, $2, including official organ; for prisoners, $1, including services of employment department.

The Central Howard Association, F. Emory Lyon, Superintendent, 1245 Monon Building, 440 South Dearborn Street, Chicago. Special field.

To the O. E. Library League, ***Date.....***

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

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Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Gives assistance to discharged or paroled prisoners by signing first friend papers, securing employment, furnishing tools, clothing and transportation; also board until pay-day when needed.

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THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

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[List No. 2] Theosophy

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2. Reincarnation, *Annie Besant.*
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6. The Devachanic Plane, *C. W. Leadbeater.*
7. Man and his Bodies, *Annie Besant.*

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The O. E. Library League

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THE SYMBOL AND THE REALITY

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

—Declaration of Independence

A year ago I quoted these words of the Declaration of Independence as an argument in favor of a rational parole law for Federal prisoners. I have quoted them since as against capital punishment and life imprisonment. Why? Because they form the basis of all rational principles of law, and not only of national or state laws, but of international law as well. No law, no custom, no belief which is in conflict with these words can be considered just, no matter what may be said in its favor from the standpoint of expediency or of compromise. The Declaration of Independence contains the essence of universal justice.

Have we forgotten it? We hear today much of the flag, but who talks about the Declaration of Independence?

We have laws for preventing the desecration of the American flag. The flag must not be used for personal profit; it must not be jeered at, trampled on or otherwise treated insultingly or lightly. That is well, but why glorify the symbol and forget the reality lying behind it? What is the reality lying behind the national symbol? Why, nothing short of these words of the Declaration of Independence which I have quoted. The flag stands for the principle that *all* men are created equal, that they have certain inalienable rights; it does not stand merely for the principle that all *Americans* have these rights; else why did not the writers of the Declaration state specifically that it applied only to the dwellers in the thirteen original states?

Why does not the society for preventing the desecration of the American flag get busy and see that these words of the Declaration of Independence are engraved or painted on the walls of every school-house, every library and other public building in America? Why does it not work to secure at least some sane and simple instruction in every school which shall take these sublime

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words as a text? It is the fashion to adorn the walls of public buildings with quotations from our great thinkers and writers; has any one seen these words on any public library or railway station?

The plain fact is, we have forgotten them.

It is not the symbol that we should reverence. What we should reverence is the principle behind it, the principle of the rights of all men, and this is nothing other than the principle—often scorned as too visionary or idealistic—of Universal Brotherhood.

We are suffering today from the delusion that we are not concerned with the principle of the rights of man unless it affects us directly. More than that, we have already crossed the line where we do not do even that much. The more we applaud the flag the less we think what it means. We protest mildly when our own toes are trodden on, when our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is infringed, but we make it a question of individual comfort. All we want is to be let alone, and we do not insist even on that.

It is no more than could be expected. When we cease to insist on the Declaration of Independence as applying to *all* men, as embodying a universal principle which it is our duty to maintain, we cease to apply it to ourselves. From being willing to see other men and women, in every respect our equals, downtrodden, robbed, murdered, outraged, driven off into slavery, we allow our own citizens to be treated in like manner. Does any one suppose that the Lusitania affair, to say nothing of others, could have happened a hundred years ago without finding every able-bodied man in the nation under arms within a week? If so, he knows nothing of our glorious past.

The glorification of the American flag, the singing of the national anthem, the talk about Americanism, these are well enough if they really lead somewhere, but unless they do they are enough to make a devil sneer. The real desecration of the flag is not in using it for advertising purposes; it is in pretending to reverence it while forgetting for what it really stands, and more, if we do remember, in refusing, in fearing, to stand for those principles to the limit and at all hazards. Universal Brotherhood, the doctrine that all men are endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, does not mean merely that we should constitute ourselves an ambulance corps or a relief committee and hasten with succor when someone is injured. It does not mean merely that we should stand by while the mischief is being done and pick up the wounded or the drowning as our boats did off Nantucket last fall. It does not mean that it is our business to relieve but not to prevent. It means much more: it means the restraint of those nations who attempt to interfere

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with human rights, at all times and in all places; by persuasion if we can, by force if we must, and quite apart from the question of whether it is in our own streets, or whether the Gulf of Mexico or the Atlantic lies between.

Twenty years ago we stretched our conception of duty in the matter of human rights enough to cross the Gulf of Mexico. Is there any difference between Cuba and Belgium? Is it really possible that we harbor the delusion that a few leagues more or less can make any difference? Is it that Cuba was within the three mile limit, or that we have in twenty years grown big, fat and afraid?

Neutrality? What does it mean? There may be various definitions, but the one which we are exemplifying is the claim to believe in a principle and the refusal to stand by it unless it suits our convenience, our comfort and our pocket-books. To be neutral to the doer is to be neutral to the deed; to be neutral to the deed is to be neutral to the principle which forbids it; to be neutral to the principle is to deny it. One cannot be neutral where a basic principle is concerned without being false to it. The most contemptible position this nation could posibly hold in the Fraternity of Nations which we all hope will be realized is that of being the one which looked on and reaped the benefit of having other nations stand up for and forcibly maintain the very principles which we were the first to insist upon, while we did not lift a hand in their defense, yes, further, while we coolly pocketed the profits, the proceeds of other men's sacrifices. You may say that it makes no difference, that we are not concerned with other folks' troubles. If so, why Cuba, why the Belgian Relief? Either these people were getting what they deserved, or they were not. If they were, why not keep hands off? If not, why stop at the demands of the stomach—about the only thing we seem able to think of in these days? But Nature—or, if you prefer, Karma—does not work in that way. You cannot continue to have the principle and to enjoy the temporary benefits of neglecting it. The moment you insist that it is of interest to you only so far it directly affects yourself, you are on the downward course. Deny your duty to stand for the rights of man everywhere, even though it be three thousand miles away, and presently you begin to do the same when it concerns your neighbor next door. Think more of your material and personal safety and comfort than of principle and presently you are where you will put up with anything rather than forego your ease or risk your skin. In short, indifference to the principles of the Declaration of Independence means national decay, and as history teaches, final ruin.

In the world crisis which is on us there is but one thing really worth while thinking about, and it is not, whether we shall get through without losing some lives and some billions of dollars, but

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whether we shall get through without losing our national honor, without losing our belief in the principle which made us a nation. It is not, whether we shall come through with bloodless hands, but whether we shall have the courage to fight for that which our ancestors, including George Washington, whose birth we are celebrating today, were willing to fight for, and whether we shall have the courage to go still further and to maintain that not only the peace of the world, but the rights of every one in it directly concerns us. It is as true of the nation as of the individual that "Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters, its soul must be washed in the blood of the heart." There is no back door by which one can escape from this principle; there are no back stairs by which one can climb to that altitude where one enjoys the benefits of universal peace and universal brotherhood. These cannot be obtained without sacrifice. "Remember that the sin and shame of the world are your sin and shame." If you believe that slavery is wrong, you must fight, if necessary, to suppress it; if you believe that the small nation has the same rights as the large nation, you must be prepared to defend your belief. We did that once. Were we really fighting for the principle or were our declarations at the time a mere pretense? As we act now, so will the future judge us.

Washington's Birthday, 1917

Correspondents Wanted For Illiterate Prisoners

We receive many applications for correspondents from prisoners whose education has been neglected and who are therefore not good writers. Some of these have to dictate their letters to others. It by no means follows that these men are otherwise deficient; on the contrary many are very intelligent and have shown wonderful improvement since we have known them. We hesitate to assign these men to new members, many of whom demand fairly well educated inmates, and who are easily discouraged and drop them without notifying us.

We invite offers to take up these men. Some ability to help with English and letter writing is useful, but is not insisted on. All we require is patience and a sympathetic understanding of the man who has had no opportunities.

We also need correspondents for colored prisoners, and such as can write Italian or German.

Newspaper Clippings Wanted

The Editor invites members to collect and send in clippings from the papers on all matters relating to prison reform and allied subjects. While it will be impossible to acknowledge these they will be much appreciated. The name and date of the paper from which they are cut will be helpful. Ordinary news reports of crimes and trials are not desired unless they have an important bearing.

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The Benevolent Old Gentleman

Several members have stated their impression that the expenses of the LEAGUE are met personally by the Editor, whom they have regarded as a wealthy and benevolent old gentleman who is disposing of his surplus income in aiding prisoners. On learning the contrary they have asked why the actual facts are not stated in the CRITIC.

What are the facts? The Editor, far from being a wealthy old gentleman, is neither the first nor the second. Whether he is the third is a matter of question. He has a personal income barely sufficient to cover his daily bread with a slim allowance of butter. He is devoting his entire time to this work and draws no salary for it. All he is in a position to give is his time and his brains—if he had more, it would go in the same direction. He has no place to lay his head except a back room in the LEAGUE office, and no household companions other than a dilapidated white rabbit. His only recreation by day, year in and year out, is his pipe, his only nightly diversion, the movies.

Who pays for the LEAGUE, then? Why, those members who are willing to make voluntary contributions. The running expenses, conducted on a more than economic basis, and including clerk hire, publishing the CRITIC, rent and incidentals, average $125 a week. It is too little, for the work is often, in fact most of the time, badly congested. It is impossible to keep even reasonably up to the current demands, to say nothing of pushing out further.

It has been estimated that if *every* member, excluding prisoners, would contribute regularly 30 cents a month it would about meet the present expenses. As a matter of fact relatively few do even this, and the major portion give nothing at all. We are not reproaching them for this. Some could, others could not. But we want once more to request the earnest consideration of each member as to what he or she can do. We want also to request those who do not get replies to their letters to ask themselves, before accusing us of negligence or indifference, whether they are themselves doing anything to make such promptness and system as they desire possible.

To Prisoners

The Editor receives many complaints from inmates that he does not answer their letters. He wishes to state that it is always a pleasure to get letters from inmates and that he invariably reads them himself. Nothing would please him more than to make a prompt response, not only to letters making requests, but also to those of a merely friendly nature. Many of these letters are most encouraging and helpful.

Unfortunately the LEAGUE has not the means to employ enough stenographers to write replies to all of these letters and for our

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present force to do it would be impossible. Our first consideration is to provide correspondents for those asking for them, and merely friendly correspondence on the Editor's part must stand aside for this. Doubtless it would be much more pleasant for him to assume the role of a correspondent, but that it not his duty; others would have to suffer if he did.

We are glad to have inmates report to us if they do not have correspondents assigned to them within a reasonable time, as it sometimes happens that we do not get their letters. All requests received are, however, carefully recorded and no one is overlooked. Requests for correspondents of a special kind have to wait till the right person can be found, and we suggest that inmates do not specify too narrowly unless they are prepared to wait. There is special difficulty in getting correspondents for colored inmates and those who wish to correspond in foreign languages, also persons in special localities.

Requests for additional correspondents will be filled as fast as possible, but must wait for those who have not been provided the first time, or whose correspondents have not written to them.

Inmates about to leave are urged to notify us, so that the CRITIC may be stopped. All prison members are notified at the end of a year to report to us, and if we receive no reply their names are dropped.

We object to inmates giving the addresses of correspondents to others over whom they have no control and who may abuse the information. We protect our prison members by treating their names as confidential and directing correspondents not to make them public, and we expect the same consideration for our correspondents from inmates.

We occasionally receive complaints from correspondents that prisoners assume an attitude of undue familiarity, such as addressing them by their first names, or in other ways which are not recognized in good society as permissible to any but members of one's own family. Doubtless this is often due to ignorance of the usual conventionalities, and as such it is pardonable, but it cannot be permitted. Where it is obvious that the education of the inmate is such to enable him to know better than to attempt familiarities it is our custom to drop him from the list upon complaint and to assign someone else to his correspondent.

All prison members of the LEAGUE should remember that violations of courtesy and of consideration toward correspondents tend to discredit the work of the LEAGUE and should use their influence against them. Some of our members are able to help more than others, but all want to help. To take advantage of this spirit in any way is something which should be resented.

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"Additional Correspondents" Wanted

We receive large numbers of requests from prisoners for "additional correspondents," in fact, we have several hundreds of these letters piled up and waiting for attention which we cannot give them because we cannot get enough correspondents to meet "first requests." These letters come mostly from prisoners whose correspondents are able to write to them but seldom, once a month or less.

If one remembers the craving which prisoners have for outside friendship it must be admitted that one letter a month is not a very large allowance, while at the same time we recognize that many cannot do more. For this reason we appeal to our members for offers to take on one, two or more of these men. Owing to the limitations existing on correspondence in most prisons, such inmates are usually unlikely to demand as much time and attention as the prisoners originally assigned.

In replying, it might be well to state "as additional correspondent."

The Best Way To Help Your Prisoner

Most prisoners who are soon to be discharged urgently need a job secured for them in advance. Instead of sending them money or luxuries, it is recommended that those who want to spend a dollar in this way should enroll them as members of THE HUMANITARIANS, who will secure them employment in advance of their discharge. The fee for prisoners, covering one year's membership, is one dollar, which should be sent to *E. C. Landis, Treasurer, Box 2, Lansing, Kansas.* The O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE will supply prisoners' application blanks on request, and if more convenient for you, will forward the money for you.

For the public at large, membership in THE HUMANITARIANS is two dollars a year, including subscription to THE SQUARE DEAL.

We get many letters from prisoners who expect soon to be released, and who need work, but who do not have the dollar for enrollment. Any money sent to us specifically for this purpose will be used in helping needy prisoners in this way.

More Members Wanted

We find it impossible to meet the demands from prisoners for correspondents and our waiting list is steadily growing. You can help us:

By offering to take one or more additional men.

By interesting your friends, not only in private conversation, but by addressing such clubs or other associations as you may belong to.

By writing to the newspapers. Don't forget to give our address; it is also better to sign your own name. Most of our best workers have come to us through this means.

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An Acknowledgement Long Overdue

The Editor takes great pleasure in expressing his grateful acknowledgement of the uniform promptness, courtesy and consideration which he has always received from his printers, *The Franklin Printing Company, 107-9 East Lombard Street, Baltimore, Md.*, who have printed the CRITIC ever since it started, nearly six years ago. He feels sure that any of our friends who care to patronize them will be equally well treated.

THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

Headquarters: **1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.**

[List No. 2] Theosophy

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A FEW REMARKS ON PRISON LABOR

Doubtless many of my readers think that I should say something new and original each time. To expect me to do that is to expect me to emulate the bird which lays its eggs and leaves it to chance to hatch them. I propose to sit on my eggs till they hatch; I propose to say the same thing over and over till there is some tangible result. The secret of success may lie in part in originality, but it consists still more in constant repetition. It is much better to bore some people with repetition than to say something really new, to be read, applauded and forgotten.

The fact that a man is a convict and is confined within the four walls of a prison should not in any way alter the economic status of the product of his labor. The finished article, a pile of broken stone, a pair of shoes, a ball of twine, is something which has a distinct value in itself which is entirely apart from the personal character of the man who made it; it has no connection with the fact that he who produced it is working in confinement and under guard and is unable to go home at night.

Discrimination against prison goods in any form, *as such,* is therefore unreasonable. An article honestly and faithfully made by a burglar or a murderer is just as good as one made by a free laborer who has never broken a law, and it is much better than one dishonestly made, with materials and workmanship not up to claims. All laws discriminating in any way against the products of prison labor simply because they are made in a prison, are class legislation and unjust; they are aimed at the producer, belonging to a class which is unfortunate and which in many respects demands our consideration if not our sympathy.

There are three things entering into a finished product, the material, the workmanship—that is, labor—and a third factor which we too seldom consider and which we may call the moral factor. How many tears and sighs do you purchase with the shirt made in a sweatshop? How much suffering of dumb animals stands behind the leather of your new boots? What brutal treatment in the forests of Brazil or the Congo has been inflicted to gather the rubber in the tires of your car?

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The consumer can in general be depended on to judge whether the first two factors are up to par without the aid of legislation, even if there are some exceptions. But the moral factor is practically beyond his control except through legislative means. How is the article made? Are the methods just, equitable and honorable? Are they consistent with the dictum that all men are equally entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? And this means in the case of prison made goods that legislation should not be directed against the articles as such, but against any methods concerned in their production which are unjust either to the convict, to his dependents, or to the public.

What are the moral factors in the case of prison labor? First, let me say that the special problems are many and complicated. They are partly inherent in prison life, partly of our own making and therefore subject to our control. The fact that the prisoner cannot work where he chooses, cannot sell his labor in the best market, cannot strike for better conditions, these things place prison labor in a wholly different category from free labor. Prison labor is an affair of the state. It is only now and then that the state interferes in questions concerning free labor, but as concerns the convict the state is first, last and everywhere. The prisoner can do nothing beyond the ordinary functions of nature without permission of and regulation by the law or officials legally appointed. Consequently legislation on this subject is abundant and, as is often the case, reflects the ignorance and prejudices of the community or the influence of those who have ends of their own to gain. And as the end to be gained is usually anything but the real interest of the prisoner, endless abuses have arisen. What are some of them?

The thirteenth amendment to the Constitution of the United States says:

"Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

"Except as a punishment for crime." The Constitution, then, legalizes practical slavery in the case of convicts and the laws enforce it. It matters nothing whether we use the term slavery or the more elegant but to all intents and purposes identical phrase "involutary servitude." The convict is a slave, nothing less, and often considerably more. As a slave, his work is involuntary; as a slave he receives nothing more than the barest necessaries of life without remuneration; as a slave, he is unable to go where he wishes. But worse than a slave, he is not even allowed the freedom of action which most slaves are permitted when not actually at work for their master.

What is the result? The product of prison slave labor, being

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produced without payment of wages, can generally be sold at a price less than that at which the identical product can be sold when produced by workmen who receive a just compensation. The effect is obvious. The market price is depressed, often below the point of profitable production. How far this can go depends on circumstances. The number of convicts is limited, but it is not only possible, but frequently happens that through specialization of prison industry the entire demand for a certain product can thus be met and the free producer is driven out of business and his employees forced to seek employment in other trades.

As a matter of course the free producers, whether employers or laborers, when they have been organized or in a position to exert political pressure, have attacked prison labor—justly, in so far as it is a system of unpaid slave labor, but unjustly so far as the mere fact of its being performed in a prison is concerned. It must be fairly obvious that the fact of an article being made within the four walls of a prison instead of the four walls of a factory can make no difference in its economic status, neither can the fact that the producer has a bad record behind him or is forced to labor. Close all the prisons tomorrow and throw all the prisoners into the labor market and pretty much the same competition would exist. Retain them in prison without work and at public expense and the taxpayer has to pay for their keep. The economic effect of maintaining 150,000 men in idleness within prison walls is the same as keeping the same number of free men unemployed at public expense—somebody has to pay for them.

The first attempt of the labor unions was to secure legislation prohibiting industries within prisons which could compete with the outside industry. Illogical as it was, one can hardly blame them. It is only one case more of trying to put the other fellow out of business. The community which tolerates a system of unpaid slave labor prejudical to the interests of the free laborer has little cause for complaint if it is forced to stop it and to pay the cost of keeping the men in idleness. In some cases this has actually been effected; in others a compromise has been made. Until recently Pennsylvania had a law by which only thirty-five per cent of its penitentiary inmates were allowed to engage in competitive industries. The balance were either kept in idleness or employed in jobs having to do with the maintenance of the prison mechanics, cooks, tailors and the like.

In the effort to meet the dilemma created by unemployment on the one hand, with consequent cost to the state and deterioration of the inmates through idleness, and on the other, of throwing cheap goods on the market and underselling the products of free labor, a very specious scheme was invented, usually known as the "state use system." Acording to this plan prison labor was not interfered with, but the product could not be sold to the

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public; it was to be sold only to the state institutions for their exclusive use. Office furniture and supplies, brooms for the charwomen, shoes and clothes for the state wards in asylums, reformatories and prisons, in short whatever the state needs in its numerous departments. Incidentally, the state use laws usually applied only to the states enacting them; they did not forbid the dumping of the prison made goods on the markets in other states. But that is a separate chapter.

On its face it looks like a beautiful solution. Whether the legislators who stood for the state use system have been humbugged themselves or whether they were trying to humbug the free laborer who thought he was getting protection does not appear, but certain it is that the proposed solution is no solution at all. It simply shifts the difficulty into channels where it is not so easily observed. Why is it no solution? Simply for this reason, that if the state uses in its offices and institutions articles made by prisoners it means just so many the less made by the free laborer. The state institutions do not exist for the purpose of consuming goods; their capacity is limited to their legitimate needs. The orphans in the state asylums, the inmates of its insane asylums and prisoners are not there for the purpose of wearing out shoes and keeping prisoners employed in making them; the charwomen can use only so many brooms a year, quite irrespective of where they are made. Every broom, every pair of shoes purchased from the state penal institutions means just one less broom or pair of shoes made by free labor. Throw your prison made articles on the market and let the state buy in the open market—or keep them out of the market and reserve them for the state use exclusively and the result is precisely the same. The competition with free labor is not reduced one iota.

The root of the whole difficulty lies in the fact that the prison labor, with a few exceptions, is nothing but slave—that is, unpaid labor. That it is involuntary is a minor matter. Probably most labor is involuntary in the sense that the laborer would not work if his life and that of his family did not depend on it. The essential feature of slave labor is that the slave gets nothing but his keep; he receives nothing towards gratifying the reasonable demands of human nature for something more than mere life; nothing towards the support of his family. towards providing for the future. In short, the problem is not one of free labor *vs.* prison labor, but of paid labor *vs.* unpaid slave labor. There can be no solution of the difficulty worth considering until the public recognizes that slave labor is an injustice not only to the slave but to those who have to compete with him, and until it pays the prisoner just the same wages as his work would fetch outside, less his board, lodging and clothes. To pay him a few cents a day is not enough; his labor must stand on the same footing as free

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labor. Then prison industry would be competitive in the same sense as free labor is competitive within itself.

This seems to me the only solution of the conflict between prison labor and free labor. It is not to be denied that in the working out difficulties would occur. In the outside world the scale of wages is established by agreement between employer and employe, backed by strikes and other well-known means. none of which are possible in a prison. The scale of wages to be paid to convicts might be the subject of legislative enactment, but as we know, the wheels of government move slowly and there would not be sufficient flexibility in such a method. Probably a permanent commission of experts charged with the power of adjusting prison wages in harmony with those outside would yield more satisfactory results.

Justice and protection to the free laborer, then, is one of the moral factors entering into the prison made product, whether it be a shoe, a basket of potatoes from the prison farm, or a road made by convict labor. But there is another moral factor, equally important—justice to the convict himself. We still harbor the delusion that the breaking of a law and consequent conviction justify us in depriving the offender of every right whatever. This is not the case, there is no sound basis for such an assumption. It was once the opinion that the parent had unlimited rights over the child, and the husband over the wife. We have abandoned those ideas, but we still cling to the notion that our power over the lawbreaker is absolute. It is not so. Our rights over others are limited to restraint, restitution and effectual guarantees. To impose restraint by confinement does not carry with it the right of confiscation. The labor of the convict is still his own, to the extent that it cannot be taken from him without just and equitable recompense. To do this is but to act the robber ourselves. He has the right to support his family, to accumulate by saving against illness and old age. He has the right to provide for the future of his children, and he has the right to do these just as fully as any of us. We may deprive him of these powers, but we cannot deprive him of the right to them. If we do, we do so at our peril; we pauperize his family and we make him a prospective pauper, to say nothing of involving ourselves in endless economic difficulties which are but the punishment for our own injustice.

Correspondents Wanted For Colored Prisoners

We are urgently in need of correspondents who will volunteer to write to colored prisoners. No colored prisoner is intentionally assigned to a correspondent without permission, and where this occurs it is because the applicant, through ignorance of the rule, has neglected to state the fact. As a result we have a very long waiting list of colored men, some of whom have been waiting for several months. Who will volunteer?

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A Warning To Generous Members

Although I am constantly trying to impress on members the inadvisability of sending money to prisoners unless upon recommendation of a responsible official, it seems impossible to stop this habit. I therefore publish a letter recently received from a prison where we have many members and which is written with official sanction. A word to the wise should be sufficient.

Incidentally I might mention that if some of those members who are so ready to send considerable sums to inmates without first satisfying themselves by consulting the warden that it will be spent as claimed, would remember that the LEAGUE work is constantly jeopardized by lack of funds and that we could find many an outgoing prisoner a job if we had the money to do it, and would give us some help, the net result would be much more satisfactory.

Dear Dr. Stokes:—

I am in a position to know that there are a good many men who take advantage of their membership in the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE and continually ask their correspondents for wearing apparel, such as shirts, shoes, stockings, handkerchiefs and many other things which are furnished by the state everywhere. Many men also ask for money which they claim is to be paid to their lawyers to defend them before the Board of Pardons. I know and have proof that nine-tenths of the money sent on their plea for defense is used for useless articles, and they even gamble with it.

I am sending you this information and please publish this in the CRITIC, and advise all of your members that whenever some of the prisoners ask for money and they are in a position to help them, let them write to the Warden of the prison first, and ask his advice. Every Warden, I believe, will be only too glad to give out the correct information as to whether the money will or can get him out or not.

Please advise your members that there are men in prison serving life sentences with no hope whatever to get out, but they tell their correspondents that they could get out for $50, and many of them get that amount—just to lose it and never get it back.

Probably by publishing this you will help both the LEAGUE and the prisoners who are deserving to be helped by some good-hearted person in their hour of need.

Most cordially yours, _____

A Plain Talk To Some Members

As is very well known, the LEAGUE invites the cooperation of those who are interested in prison problems, and especially of those who are willing to take an interest in individual inmates to the extent of writing to them. The LEAGUE does not exclude others who do not wish to do this. Any one may become a member upon complying with the very modest terms of membership.

At the same time, the LEAGUE aims to be an association of workers. It is not looking for those who simply want their names on our list without doing anything. There is great flexibility in this respect. No one is asked to do the impossible or even the inconvenient. There are those who can look after a dozen prison-

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ers; others can give time to but one or two. Some can write a letter a week to an inmate, others can write but one a month. All of these are equally welcomed. Those also are welcomed who have no time to spare, but who can give a little financial assistance, or interest others in our work.

But the LEAGUE is not looking for those who do nothing. The mere carrying of a name on our list, sending notices, making the index cards, changing addresses, supplying the CRITIC, cost more than the registration fee of ten cents and the CRITIC subscription. These charges have to be paid by some one and if the member does not bear them himself, or render some other equivalent, the costs have to be borne by others. Something is expected from each member.

There is one class for which the LEAGUE has no use whatever. I have in mind those who offer to write to prisoners, and then, after making the offer and receiving the names, simply neglect them without giving us the least notice. I cannot imagine anything much more heartless than to arouse the anticipation of an unfortunate prisoner, through a pretended interest in him, and then neglecting him. No one is expected to write to prisoners whom they find uncongenial, or to write oftener than they can, but an ordinary sense of honor and of consideration, and I might add of self-respect, should lead those who find that they have undertaken more than they can accomplish to notify us, promptly, so that other arrangements can be made. I get some complaints that the prisoners assigned do not answer letters. They are but very few compared with the complaints from prisoners that the correspondents assigned to them do not write at all, or if they do, that they gradually cease to do so.

It is entirely possible to provide other correspondents for these prisoners; it is equally possible to provide other prisoners for the correspondent. But we cannot be inquiring every few weeks from our thousands of members and prisoners whether they are getting on well. Many prisoners who are new to our work, after finding the first correspondent indifferent, conclude that our plan is worthless, or are too modest to ask for another. Many correspondents, also, give up if the first prisoner does not prove interesting.

The result is that such members compromise our work seriously and do more harm than good unless they notify us promptly of any difficulty.

If a correspondent feels unable to write often enough to a prisoner, it is easy enough to provide an additional correspondent without interrupting the relations already established.

There is one pledge which all members should take upon entering the LEAGUE, and this is, either to attend faithfully to the work they have undertaken, or to notify us promptly of their inability to do so. If this is done we shall be satisfied.

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Members will not be considered in good standing after their CRITIC subscription has expired and a renewal notice has been sent, After a second notice without response, they are dropped from the list and their prisoners assigned to other members.

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The Great Initiates, 2 vols., sold only, $2.50.
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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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The O. E. Library League

Vol. VI **Wednesday, April 4, 1917** **No. 17**

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS **SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS**

TORTURE *VS.* CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone. —*Genesis, ii;18*

We are entering on what promises to be a nation-wide agitation against the death penalty, and in view of this it might be well to consider what is and what is not a just and reasonable substitute.

The following states have abolished capital punishment. The date of the abolition is stated:

Arizona (1916)
Kansas (1907)
Maine (1876)
Michigan (1847)
Minnesota (1911)
North Dakota (1915)
Oregon (1914)
Rhode Island (1852)
South Dakota (1915)
Washington (1913)
Wisconsin (1853)

Seven of these eleven states have abolished the death penalty within ten years, and five within five years. Geographically considered, it is interesting to observe that the area still standing out for legal murder for more than one offense is almost identical with that which held out for negro slavery and which still affords the greatest harvest of lynchings.

There is at present a strong agitation against capital punishment in California, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Missouri and possibly in other states, and which in Missouri and Pennsylvania has progressed so far as the introduction of bills into the legislature. Delaware has voted the proposition down; it still clings to its whipping post and to execution for five crimes—the only state which does so.

The bill before the Missouri legislature, which has already passed the house by a vote of 84 to 38, is a model of simplicity and directness. It reads as follows:

Sec. 1. From and after the taking effect of this act it shall be unlawful in this state to take human life as a punishment for crime.

Sec. 2. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed.

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This strikes at the root of the evil, with no needless exceptions or provisos.

The Pennsylvania bill is equally a model for what such an act should not be. It replaces the death penalty by *solitary* confinement for life, all other provisions relating to capital offenses being retained.

Please note the word "solitary." What does this really involve? It means just this, that the rapid and elegant method of the electric chair is to be replaced by slow torture for life—nothing less. It overlooks the real aim of so-called punishment and retains the conception of revenge; it means that authors of this bill have not yet risen to the point where they realize that pain inflicted in a spirit of revenge is just as barbarous and unjust, just as criminal, as the offense against which it is directed; it means that they are still mentally in the age when torture was regarded as a proper way to treat the offender.

Temporary solitary confinement as an expedient in the treatment of refractory prisoners is nothing unusual; probably it is justifiable and if not too prolonged certainly cannot be regarded as a barbarous means of punishment.

But solitary confinement for life! That is revenge pure and simple, because it has nothing to do with protecting the community, with reforming the offender, with affording restitution. Neither has it any value as a deterrent. If the offender adapts himself to it with equanimity it means nothing; if he does not, then the question arises; is it worth while? is it reasonable? is it just?

"Actions speak louder than words" is a saying which applies to the Almighty as well as to any one of us. You, who object to the death penalty on the score that the Lord God said "Thou shalt not kill," should observe that He has with equal emphasis indicated His intentions by giving every beast and bird its companion. There is scarcely a creature of higher development on earth, or in the air or water which does not at least at some time seek the society of its kind. Animals tend to be gregarious. And if the Lord God has spoken against capital punishment, He has also asserted that "it is not good that the man should be alone." Our attempt to wreak vengeance by isolation is no less an act against the laws of the Eternal than the extinction of life. It is even more so. It is a notorious fact that most condemned murderers become "converted." Like the dying thief on the cross the gallows ushers them into the joys of Paradise. If there is companionship beyond the grave we are more merciful if we despatch the offender to those regions at once than if we keep him in solitude for ten, twenty, forty years, a solitude to be terminated only by death.

But leaving the religious argument out of account there can be no question that solitary confinement is imposed directly and solely with the idea of causing suffering; it is intended as a form of tor-

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ture, none the less barbarous because it does not include what we call physical pain. You do not have to go to the poets, the philosophers or psychologists to learn what deprivation of society means. What would it mean to you, to whom most that makes life worth living is to be found in the companionship of your kind? You have only to consider what it would mean in your own case. It is a blunt fact that man is a social animal, that in general he can maintain his mental balance only when allowed a certain amount of intercourse with his fellows. True, there have been those who have withstood the wearing effects of long periods of isolation, but it has been under conditions allowing of freedom of action, of life out of doors, of all other means of occupying the mind except association, or in some cases under the influence of some powerful religious motive. In rare instances religious enthusiasts have found a substitute for companionship; hermits and yogis have lived apart for years, but solitary confinement in a four by ten cell offers none of these opportunities; it is calculated to foster all of the abnormal and pathological mental tendencies to which man may become a prey. Your proposition to keep a man in solitary confinement for life is a proposition to make him insane or imbecile if you can, and if he is strong enough to withstand it, at least to cause him the maximum amount of mental misery. For out and out devilishness I know of nothing quite equal to solitary confinement for life. Physical suffering soon breaks down the body; the suffering is soon over. But isolation!—that keeps the body alive and destroys the mind. If that is not what you are aiming at, why do you wish to impose it?

I totally oppose life sentence pronounced in advance, because the commission of a so-called capital offense is not itself a proof that the offender may not at some future time be capable of making good. I by no means deny that there are those who can never safely be trusted at large; but that is not the question. When the law prescribes a life sentence it takes no account whatever of the character of the offender; it admits of no excuse except the notoriously vague plea of "insanity;" it does not consider the circumstances, the provocation, the possibility of temporary aberration, of unusual social conditions; it does not regard the possibility of a radical change in mental or moral attitude with advancing age or under improved conditions. It simply says, commit the offense and you will be deprived of all chance for life, no matter what you were, are, or might become.

And yet there are endless circumstances which cannot be taken into account and which must be left to the future to work out. Punishment for crime should invariably consider the future as well as the past. This means that no sentence whatever should be other than indeterminate. We have begun to recognize this principle in the case of the greater number of offenses. The indeterminate

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sentence is rapidly taking the place of the flat sentence, but it is still proposed to retain the flat sentence for a few crimes. The position is an illogical one.

But even admitting that imprisonment for life may be a necessary course at times, what are the real objects of punishment and how far are they met by solitary confinement as distinguished from ordinary confinment?

They may be summed up under five heads—restraint; effectual guarantees against repetition; reformation; restitution; deterrence of others by example.

Restraint is effected by confinement under ordinary conditions just as effectively as by solitary confinement. The man under guard in a ten acre lot with a high wall around it is just as little liable to commit murder, rape, arson or treason as if limited to a small cell and forbidden to talk to his companions in confinement. On this count the provision for complete isolation effects nothing whatever.

Effectual guarantees that the offense will not be repeated. The mere fact of life imprisonment is a sufficient guarantee in itself. Even if it is proposed to liberate the offender after a term of years, solitary confinement gives him no chance to prove that he can conduct himself properly in association with other human beings. The man's conduct in prison always plays a large part in the question of parole. But he must be judged with reference to his relations to others. Will he behave himself if at liberty? Such associations as prison life afford offer little enough opportunity for testing this, but to shut him up in a box year after year, allowing such social instincts as he may have to rust completely, surely that is the very worst way possible for deciding such a question.

Reformation. To reform the convict means to develop in him normal social instincts, to prepare him to play his part as a law-abiding citizen; that is, to associate with others without the necessity of having a club held constantly over his head. Self-control, self-government can be learned only by living under conditions which call for them. Our whole prison system is pervaded with the notion of teaching swimming by keeping one out of the water.

Deterrence of others by the example of punishment. It is a well-known fact, based on human nature and established by observation, that it is not the severity but the certainty of punishment which tends to restrain. He who commits a premeditated offense always, or nearly always, assumes that he has a fair chance to escape. People gamble on chances, but they seldom have a vivid mental impression of the result of losing. At the end of the eighteenth century England punished about two hundred offenses with death, but crime was more common than it has ever been since. The laws should be directed towards certainty of punishment rather than towards severity. The infliction of a severe punishment, a

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punishment beyond the minimum limit necessary to accomplish the above results with the individual in question is based on the irrational assumption that we have the right to inflict suffering beyond this limit in order to deter others from prospective crimes. It is irrational because it holds the offender responsible for the future acts of others over whom he has no manner of control. To impose an excessive penalty on a guilty man for any such reason differs only in degree but not in kind from imposing it on the innocent. The Teutonic method of assembling a lot of innocent citizens and shooting one man in ten in order to punish a sniper or to prevent others from sniping not only differs in no way from hanging a perfectly innocent man in public as a sample of what will happen to the murderer, but it differs in no way from the idea of punishment as an example. To sentence a murderer to solitary confinement for life when common confinement will effect the same result is of precisely the same nature. Punishment must have reference to the particular offense and individual in question; it cannot possibly with justice have reference to the prospective crimes of others. Each case must be treated precisely as if it were the first and last of its kind.

The addition of solitary confinement to a life sentence is therefore not only needless and ineffective; it is cruel and excessive punishment; it is the substitution of slow torture, of lingering mental death for rapid execution; it breathes the spirit of revenge, and it is earnestly to be hoped that those who are fighting the death penalty will not be deluded into accepting this as a substitute.

Handbook On Capital Punishment

The National Committee on Prisons has issued a most instructive and convenient pamphlet on capital punishment. Apart from the arguments against the death penalty it contains a large number of data and statistics which will be of value to those who wish to inform themselves on this topic. Especially interesting is the map of the United States showing the states which have abolished capital punishment, and those which still retain it for one or more offenses.

Do you know the law of your own state? Has it abolished the death penalty, or does it still inflict it for any of the following crimes, murder, rape, arson, burglary, treason, and if so, which?

The "Handbook" can be obtained by sending ten cents to the *National Committee on Prisons Broadway and 116th Street, New York City.*

Members admitted to the LEAGUE, two weeks ending March 24th: Prisoners, 77; outsiders, 64. Registered membership number. March 24th, 7,156.

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Opinion Of An Expert On Unrestricted Mail Privileges For Prisoners

I am permitted to publish the following letter from Hon. J. J. Sanders, Parole Clerk and Secretary of the Parole Board of the Arizona State Prison at Florence, Arizona, to the Counsel of the New Jersey Prison Inquiry Commission.

Its special value lies in the fact that Mr. Sanders has long had entire supervision of the prison mail, and as censor and parole officer at the same time is in a position to speak with authority, without being open to the accusation of indulging in "sentimental slush."

Mr. Sanders has published a pamphlet on this subject which can be obtained from him on request.

March 9th, 1917.

Mr. Nelson B. Gaskill, Counsel Prison Inquiry Commission,
Trenton, New Jersey.

Dear Sir:—

I am pleased to learn you contemplate a change in the New Jersey state prison in the matter of the mail the inmate may send and receive. Our very liberal mail system in the Arizona state prison has been the means of changing many a man's thoughts from destructive channels into constructive ones. To shut a man away from our modern literature may be likened to a florist who would place his plants in a dark cellar away from all sunlight and then expect them to produce beautiful flowers. Man needs the light of present day literature in order to progress, grow and become a better and bigger man; if he is deprived of this for any considerable time, he will shrink and shrivel into a despicable creature.

While the influence of current literature is great in its influence for human progress, it is not to be compared to the influence of letters from friends and relatives to the man shut away in prison. Inmates who are limited and deprived of communication with friends and relatives become morose and sullen. An angel from highest heaven would lose her temper subjected to the rules of many American prisons governing the mail of the inmates. What condition of mind would you and your commission be in if deprived of all mail privileges for any considerable period? How have your feelings been disturbed when even waiting for an expected letter? From this you can readily see the influence of restricted mail in prison for prisoners is a bad one.

I have had five years' experience inspecting the mail of the inmates of the Arizona state prison. Mail comes and leaves this institution every day in the year. A prisoner is never deprived of his mail privileges. All letters are inspected. I have found the influence always on the side of right and progress. No other influence in operation here is fraught with such great compensating influence for the rehabilitation of the inmate as is our very liberal mail privilege. So I feel fully justified in commending your contemplated change in Jersey's state prison rules governing the inmates' mail; you would do well to abolish all rules that restrict.

Wishing you success in the great work in which you are now engaged I am,

Very cordially yours,

J. J. SANDERS.

Note—Clip out the above article and send it to the Governor, the Superintendent of Prisons or the Warden of the State Prison in your state.

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Return Those Letters!

All prisoners' letters sent out from this office are stamped with a request to return them to us. The same request is usually made in writing to the correspondent.

Notwithstanding this, many neglect to return them. Quite apart from the fact that they are our property and are sent with the understanding that they are to be returned, neglect to do so is a source of constant embarrrassment to us and in not a few cases acts prejudicially on the prisoner's future prospects. We do not object to their being held a reasonable time for reply, but they should not be kept longer than necessary. It is not necessary to write a letter when returning them, as our records afford sufficient identification of the sender.

Request To Prisoners

Prisoners are requested to report to us if they do not find their correspondents satisfactory, when others will be provided as promptly as possible.

Membership In The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired.

Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

To the lady who thanked us for having heeded her suggestion to suppress our goat we wish to say that the goat is merely taking a vacation. He'll be back soon.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used

for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

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List No. 2] Theosophy

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Schwarz, A.—Vade-Mecum to *Man: Whence, How and Whither,* paper, $0.30.

Scott-Elliot, W.—The Lost Lemuria, with 2 maps, $1.00.
Lemuria was the continent preceding Atlantis.
The Law of Sacrifice, paper, sold only, $0.35.
The Story of Atlantis, with 4 maps, $1.25.

Seiling, Max—Theosophy and Christianity, $0.[illegible]
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Server—Meditations selected from *At the Feet of the Master,* paper, $0.30.

Severs, Elizabeth—Some Noble Souls, $1.75.
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Sinnett, A. P.—Esoteric Buddhism, $1.25.
A famous work, based upon information received by the author from one of the Masters.
The Growth of the Soul, $1.50.
The theosophical theory of the soul, its reincarnations and the influence of Karma.
Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky, $1.00.
The best biography of H. P. B.
In the Next World, $0.75.
Astral life of dead men as told by themselves.
Karma, a Novel, $0.50.
Nature's Mysteries and How Theosophy Illuminates Them, paper, $0.25
Occult Essays, $1.00.
The Occult World, $1.25.
Contains more information about the Masters than any other book.
The Rationale of Mesmerism, $1.25.
Transactions of the London Lodge, by *A. P. Sinnett*:
The Pyramids and Stonehenge, paper, $0.35.
The Constitution of the Ego, paper, $0.35.
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The Knowledge Needed for Progress, paper, $0.35.
The Infinitudes of Progress, paper, $0.35.
Theosophical Teachings liable to be Misunderstood, paper, $0.35.
The Superphysical Laws of Nature, paper, $0.25.
The Bearing of Occult Study on Ordinary Life, paper, $0.25.
Theosophy and the Problems of Life, paper, $0.35.

Steiner, Dr. Rudolf—Christianity as a Mystical Fact and the Mysteries of Antiquity, $1.60.
The Education of Children from the Standpoint of Theosophy, $0.55.
Initiation and its Results, $1.00.
Sequel to *The Way of Initiation.*
The Gates of Knowledge, $1.35.
Sequel to *Initiation and its Results.*
The Lord's Prayer, paper, $0.25.
The Mystics of the Renaissance and their Relation to Modern Thought. $1.60.
The Occult Significance of Blood, paper, $0.25.
An Outline of Occult Science, $1.60.
The Philosophy of Freedom, $1.35.

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Vol. VI Wednesday, April 18, 1917 No. 18

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE AWAKENING

Kill out desire of life.
Kill out desire of comfort.
Desire peace fervently.
—Light on the Path

If you have that excellent habit of keeping a diary and record not only incidents, but also your thoughts and impressions on current events, you will be likely to notice a change in your sentiments within recent times—that is to say if you are an average American and not one of the copperhead variety. That which has been going on in your mind during the past three years is what has been happening to millions of your fellow citizens from the President down. You may have been a little ahead of or a little behind Mr. Wilson or the leaders of public opinion, but it does not matter; the course of your thoughts has been the same. There is an astounding difference of sentiment between the President's utterances in his peace note of a few months back and his address to Congress on April 2d. One could hardly attribute them to the same author; one could hardly believe that any one could change so suddenly. But I want you to remember that the President is a man like yourself, and that what has been happening to you has been happening to him also. You and all of us have been going through a process for which perhaps no better term can be found than an "awakening." And what I want most of all to emphasize is this; that even your attitude of today is possibly not a final one; that you are still but partly awake and that what seems now your final viewpoint is but a single milestone on the road of your growth. In this process of growth is to be found in a measure a reply to the question "What is war for?"

Turn to the earlier pages of your diary, written or mental, and if you are the average citizen you will find that at the outbreak of the war you were one of that once much respected class of "neutrals." You may have had a certain sympathy with one side or the other, such as almost any one has with regard to a war in which he has no direct concern. You may have been an admirer of Ger-

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man Kultur and have recognized rightly the debt which the world owes to Germany for its great scientific discoveries and its painstaking development of discoveries not its own. By virtue of race or other reasons you may have had a preference for the other side. Still, you probably looked on the war as a political squabble without direct interest for you; a mere disturbance of that mysterious something known as the balance of power, likely to terminate as other wars have ended, in some trivial readjustment which could concern only the parties involved and with no very serious detriment to any of them, no matter which was victorious.

Here and there were men, Roosevelt for example, described as hotheads and extravagant idealists, who took just the position you are taking today and who aroused antagonism by their unneutral attitude. Perhaps you were for peace at any price, perhaps not, but in any event, while you felt sorry for the Belgians and Serbians and perhaps were willing to contribute towards their relief a small fraction of a percent of your share in the prosperity which the war brought to us, you calmly swallowed the Lusitania outrage, which came much nearer home, and could not be brought to believe that its real significance lay in the fact that those who could countenance such a crime, who made a national celebration of it and conferred honors on its perpetrators were not to be trusted anywhere or at any time. What you wanted was to keep the nation out of war just as long as possible and to allow it the chance to profit by the sufferings of others who were fighting for human rights. So you decried preparedness, talked of the waste of national energy in armaments, the dangers of militarism, the loss of time involved in universal military training. In brief, you took the attitude of which you now are, or should be, heartily ashamed, that peace and ease of life are the first considerations and that the ethics of the matter are none of your affair so long as you do not have to suffer.

That was about your position a few months ago, Mr. Average American. You were a glaring example of the proverbial Yankee who thinks of nothing but his money bags. It is needless to refer to the events of the past few months. Nearly all of us have now awakened to the necessity of defending our rights at all costs. It is a splendid awakening, but it is but one step. There is a fairly sharp line between defending one's own rights and defending the rights of others. We are standing on that line today. Some of us have already passed it. There are those who regard the war on which we are entering as a national issue, while others, happily a rapidly increasing number, have awakened so far as to see that it is a world issue, not a national matter, and that the real question is not whether we shall stand for the rights of man as asserted in the Declaration of Independence as applying to ourselves only, but as holding for all mankind. The war long ago took on this aspect among the allies, but it is but yesterday that it took the same form with some of us. The situation is rapidly developing into an ethical

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one. The spirit of the Crusaders is abroad. We are going to fight not because we have been injured or are threatened, but for the rights of man everywhere. It is now becoming evident that the world is in the throes of a new birth and we have declared our intention to bear our part at all costs. To quote the closing words of the President's address:

"To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that that day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

So far, so good. But is this the final stage of our awakening? I hope not. I hope that the awakening will not end until we have all come to recognize that the question of the right of each nation to govern itself, the standpoint that every man is endowed by his Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is not a final one. It is the burning question of the moment, but we still look on life and the pursuit of happiness as final aims. We are willing to risk our lives and our temporary happiness to secure these for ourselves and for others. But what we must see is that the end towards which we must strive is not life, but the readiness to lay it down at any time; not happiness, but the willingness to forego it; not freedom from the necessity for sacrifice, but the fervent desire for sacrifice whenever and wherever it shall promote the well-being of the race. The wave of splendid enthusiasm which is sweeping over us must be, not a temporary condition in the face of a crisis, but a fixed and permanent attitude of mind with each and all of us. The enemy is with us always and everywhere. It is not this or that nation or party or military clique or dynasty, but the enemy in our own hearts, the desire of life and of comfort above all things even at the expense of others.

Life is very dear to many of us, perhaps to most. We do not differ in this respect from the cow or the crocodile. The greater our intelligence, the greater our prosperity, the more do we desire to continue it. Naturally there is a good reason for our wanting to stay alive. Nature has implanted the fear of death in every conscious being for the very good reason that the race could not be maintained without it; it has endowed them with the fear of pain because pain is a danger signal, a sign for retreat. But is it not wonderful to see how this very desire of life and fear of pain are overcome even in the beast by the love of its offspring, the altruistic sentiment in its beginning? This altruistic sentiment, even when it conflicts with the primitive instinct of self-preservation and love of pleasure is the goal towards which we are working at present.

"Kill out desire of life: kill out desire of comfort"—these much misunderstood and often derided precepts of *Light on the Path*, which are in fact fundamental principles of the higher life.

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are well worth meditating over. We are now in a position to see that if we will accomplish the high aims for which we are about to fight we must follow these rules for the time being. We must follow them because the aim, the liberation of mankind, cannot be realized without them. We must sacrifice comfort and if need be life also. But there will always be the problem of liberation. When it is no longer a question of liberation from the tyrant and oppressor, it will be liberation from our own primitive impulses, from the desire to enjoy life regardless of others. To kill out desire of life does not mean to disregard life, but as to treat it as a secondary consideration. To kill out desire of comfort does not mean that we should become ascetics; it means that there is something more than comfort and that is the ability to forego it voluntarily if occasion demands, without flinching and without regret. These lessons are being learned everywhere in Europe today, both in the trenches and behind them. This is the great awakening; it may be a permanent one; it may persist long after the sacrifices necessitated by the war have ceased to be needful.

For who cannot foresee that the establishment of universal democracy, of the political rights of every man is but a beginning. that other warfare is still before us, warfare against the innumerable social ills that have their root largely in the desire to live and enjoy life regardless of and at the expense of others? These problems which we shall have to attack are varied and complex; they call for the highest intelligence, but still more for self-sacrifice. But now is the time to think of preparedness, and the preparedness lies largely in each of us having made these simple precepts—"kill out desire of life;" "kill out desire of comfort" a part of our nature.

The philosophy of war has been discussed of late from various standpoints. I think we are today in a position to see something of both its reason and its purpose, of its justification in our own awakening. War is one of the means employed by the Higher Powers, or if you prefer, by Nature, to arouse man from that spiritual lethargy into which he is likely to fall by reason of his control over the forces about him. It is God's way of calling us to order and forcing us to ask ourselves why we are here.

"Desire peace fervently." What is peace? It is not the condition which consists in the absence of hostilities. It is the personal attitude of mind consisting in perceiving that one is fighting, if fighting at all, for something really worth while; it is the recognition that progress is often best made by suffering and the cheerful endurance of such suffering. And with all the warlike feeling in our hearts today I do not doubt that there is many an American who for the first time in many months is experiencing real peace of mind in the feeling that we are no longer on the fence, no longer shirking our clear duty, but are arming to meet it with all our strength.

And perhaps I might conclude here by saying that this is a big victory for the idealists. Those who were scorned yesterday have

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almost the entire nation with them today. As one of those scorned idealists I cannot help feeling highly jubilant about it. Why, haven't you read that even William Jennings Bryan has volunteered to fight those whom yesterday he would have allowed to overrun the whole world without resistance? Even the pacifists are beginning to wake up.

The Humanitarians—A Catechism in National Preparedness

Do you realize that the great question of the day is national preparedness?

Do you know that the nation has need of every man who can work, and that if he is able and willing to work it is sheer folly to keep him locked up in prison?

Are you aware of the fact that most discharged prisoners want to make good, and do so if given a reasonable chance?

Do you know that the chief reason for recidivism—the scientific name for backsliding into crime—is not that the ex-prisoner wants to be bad, but that he is forced to be?

Do you know that he is sent out into the world with no funds other than the five dollars given him by the state and wearing a suit of clothes which fairly shrieks "jail bird?"

Suppose you had but five dollars to your name, no friends—for they have all deserted you—no recommendations or testimonials and the necessity of either lying to a prospective employer or facing the alternative of being kicked out the door if you told the truth? How would you feel?

How long do you suppose your five dollars would last if you were hunting for work under these conditions, running about over the town, lugging your prison record with you and being turned down everywhere you apply?

Do you realize that when his five dollars are spent the ex-prisoner has no alternative but to starve or steal?

Which would you do if you found yourself in a similar dilemma—steal or starve?

Would you choose being run in by the police as a vagrant, with a prison record behind you, or would you take chances in a hold-up or a burglary?

Do you know that the money spent by the state in apprehending, trying and convicting one backslider and sending him to prison at public expense would if rationally expended provide dozens of such men with permanent employment?

Do you know that it costs on an average of $6.62 to keep the ex-prisoner out of prison by finding him a job in advance and helping him to get to the place where he is to work?

Have you any idea where that $6.62 is to come from?

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Do you know that under present conditions this duty is practically neglected by the state and is left to volunteer associations which aim to help the ex-convict?

Do you know that it is paid mainly by small contributions from people like yourself, who believe that prevention is better than cure and that every man saved to the nation is a substantial contribution to national preparedness?

Have you heard of THE HUMANITARIANS, an association started by prisoners about a year ago, but aided and endorsed by leading men all over the country—including the Editor of the CRITIC—which makes its business to secure work in advance for outgoing prisoners, paying their way to the place where they are to work, and seeing to it that their past record will not count against them with their employers?

Don't you see that by becoming a select member of this association you will be making a contribution to national preparedness just as surely as if you gave your membership fee to any one of the various patriotic associations?

Isn't the re-making of a man, changing him from an enemy of society into a co-operator, about the most patriotic job you could engage in at the present moment?

Does the annual select membership fee of two dollars scare you?

The briefest, sanest, most satisfactory and least time-wasting answer you can give to the above queries is to sign the HUMANITARIAN membership application blank to be found on another page and send it with two dollars to the address thereon. This will make you a select member for one year and an active participator in this form of preparedness.

For your further information I quote from a letter just received from the Secretary of THE HUMANITARIANS:

> THE HUMANITARIANS was established during the summer of 1916.
>
> Our membership today counts some seven hundred. About 600 prisoners distributed over 21 prisons, and approximately 100 citizens who are interested in the men in gray.
>
> We have placed within the past few months 134 released men; 95 per cent are making good.
>
> THE HUMANITARIANS have also advanced as loans to these released men some seven hundred dollars. This money has been very slow in coming back as it naturally requires some time for the man from prison to re-establish himself in society.
>
> Our work is national in scope; we need material, financial support for the purpose of carrying out our program.

Members admitted to the LEAGUE, two weeks ending April 7th: prisoners, 56; outsiders, 46. Registered membership number, April 7th, 7,270.

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Clerical Help Wanted

We shall be glad to hear from two or three of our members in the eastern section of the country, within a day's mailing distance of Washington, who are good typists and who are willing to give us a little help in writing form letters. We supply all stationery and pay the postage. The work is not such as to interfere with other duties, and nothing but promptness and accuracy are expected.

Mailing Envelopes For The Critic

The LEAGUE owes a bill of $98 for its last lot of 50,000 mailing envelopes for the CRITIC, which must be met presently. This is one of the periodical and unpleasant necessities which causes us many pangs. Which of our members will help towards settling it?

Faith—By Our Goat

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. —*Hebrews, ii;1*

This refers to our attitude with respect to that LEAGUE contribution which you promised and have not paid.

Also, to the contribution which you have neither promised nor paid.

Finally, to the continuation of our prison work unless something more substantial materializes than unfulfilled promises and barren good wishes.

Second-Hand Theosophical Books

If you have theosophical or occult books which you do not need, send us names of authors and titles and we will make you an offer. We give good rates for such books when sent in for exchange or credit, and often pay cash outright. No responsibility for books sent without previous agreement.

Humanitarian Select Membership Blank

MR. E. C. LANDIS, *Treasurer*
THE HUMANITARIANS
Lansing, Kansas

.....191.....

DEAR SIR: I accept Select Membership in THE HUMANITARIANS, with whose work I am in genuine sympathy, and enclose

..... for $.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....

NOTE—The annual Select Membership fee is Two Dollars, or more, which includes subscription to the Association's official publication.

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Headquarters: **1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.**

List No. 2] Theosophy

(Subject to change without notice)

Steiner, Dr. Rudolf—Continued from last CRITIC

The Submerged Continents of Atlantis and Lemuria, $1.10.

Their History and Civilization, being chapters from the Akashic Records. Valuable mainly from the standpoint of psychology and sex evolution.

Theosophy, $1.00.

Three Essays on Haeckel and Karma, $1.25.

The Way of Initiation, or How to attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds, $1.00.

Street, J. C.—The Hidden Way Across the Threshold, $3.50.

Next to *The Secret Doctrine* the most encyclopedic work on all phases of occultism. Much read.

Tagore, Rabindranath—Gitanjali, $1.35; leather, sold only, $1.70.

The Gardener, $1.35; leather, sold only, $1.70.

King of the Dark Chamber, $1.35; leather, sold only, $1.70.

Sadhana, the Realization of Life, $1.35; leather, sold only, $1.70.

Chitra, a Play in one Act, $1.10; The Crescent Moon, Child Poems, $1.10

Post Office, $1.10; Songs of Kabir, $1.35; Biography of Tagore, $1.10.

Hungry Stones and other Stories, $1.45.

Tarot—*Papus,* The Tarot of the Bohemians, $2.00. *A. E. Waite,* Pictorial Key to the Tarot, $1.75. Set of Tarot cards, with Key, by *A. E. Waite,* $2.75.

Taylor, Thomas—Select Works of Plotinus, $1.60.

Underhill, Evelyn—Mysticism; a Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness, $3.70.

The Mystic Way; a Psychological Study in Christian Origins, $3.70.

Practical Mysticism, $1.10.

Miss Underhill's books are classical and the most complete study of mysticism extant.

Upanishads—The Upanishads, transl. by F. Max Mueller, 2 vols., each, $3.60

From the Upanishads (selections), by *Charles Johnston,* cloth, $0.55; leather, sold only, $0.80.

Upanishads, trans., by *Mead,* out of print.

The Yoga of Yama (trans. of the Katha-upanishad, by *W. Gorn Old*) $0.75.

The Wisdom of the Upanishads, by *Annie Besant,* $0.75.

Vail, Rev. Chas. H.—Ancient Mysteries and Modern Masonry, $1.00.

Van Hook, Weller—Principles of Education, $0.25.

Van Manen, Johan—Some Psychic Experiences, $0.60.

With comments by *C. W. Leadbeater.*

Wachtmeister, Countess—Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and the "Secret Doctrine," $0.65; paper, sold only, $0.50.

Waite, A. E.—Azoth, or the Star in the East, $2.00.

The Doctrine and Literature of Kabalah, $2.50.

The Hidden Church of the Holy Grail, $2.50.

The Secret Doctrine in Israel, $3.50.

A study of the Zohar and its Connections.

The Secret Tradition in Freemasonry, 2 vols., sold only, $15.00.

The Way of Divine Union, $2.50.

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

FILLING THE VACUUM

"Satan," said Dr. Watts, "finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." And the doctor might with equal truth have added, "for idle brains to think." You have doubtless read the story in the Bible—if you have not, you can find it in Matthew xii, 43—about the evil spirit who was cast out of a man and who returned later to look at his former home and found it "empty, swept and garnished." Then he gathered together seven other spirits more wicked than himself and entered in and dwelt there. And as the story puts it, "The last state of that man was worse than the first."

There is nothing surprising about this. When the "For Rent" card is hung out, the first comer gets the lease. The evil spirit is always on the lookout for the sign "To Let." The owner of the premises is not always over-scrupulous, he has to keep his property occupied, but it is largely up to the neighbors to see to it that a disorderly house is not established. If you do not want a family of devils in the house next door you will have to take a personal interest in seeing that good tenants are provided. You may say it is not your affair. Perhaps not, but all the same you will have to put up with the consequences of your indifference.

One does not have to assume that the devil is to blame when an empty brain becomes the home of idle and pernicious thoughts. Nature abhors a vacuum. Unless the owner of the brain is an imbecile, he has by nature to keep it working, and of course fills it with whatever comes first. This applies not only to the men and boys in penal and reformatory institutions; it holds equally for yourself. The trouble with most of our methods of punishment is that they aim—and badly enough at that—at casting the evil spirit out of a man and putting him through a process which is honored with the designation of "sweeping and garnishing," but which in reality is just this—getting ready for seven other devils worse than the first. These methods pay exceedingly little attention to the question of providing new and suitable tenants for the mind. What is a reformatory? A reformatory is an institution into which are gathered men and boys, also women and girls, who in a majority of cases have never had a decent training, their minds filled with

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all sorts of rubbish, from trifling and useless thoughts down to the worst products of the underworld. You may perhaps be able to scare a portion of this stuff out of them, but in fact, most of it is lugged in and no rules of inspection can prevent its being let loose to the detriment of others. Can you imagine what would happen if in a single ward in a hospital were assembled sufferers from every sort of infectious disease, tuberculosis, typhoid, typhus, diphtheria, smallpox, yellow fever, and what not? It would defy the best physician in the world to diagnose the complications which would result. Yet this is just what we do when infectious moral diseases are concerned, and then we call the institution a "reformatory!" It is a notorious fact that the foundation of many a criminal career is laid in such institutions. The boy who is sent up for being just idle, refractory or stubborn, finds himself in an atmosphere of gambling, pocket picking, sexual vices and filth unutterable. Quite the same is true of the penitentiaries. But why enlarge on this? Any man who has been through prison can tell you about it.

How is the vacuum to be filled? How are good tenants to be provided? Let me quote from one of our leading criminal psychologists. Dr. William Healy, in his admirable work, *The Individual Delinquent,* says:

> This question of supplying healthy mental interests has important bearings for those who are shut out in any way from normal participation in what is ordinarily offered by way of occupation or recreation. I am not sure but that a goodly share of the reason for the feebleminded falling into evil ways is because they in an ordinary environment are not afforded suitable mental interests. We have had the good fortune to witness some striking examples of the effect of suitable mental interests given to individuals who had been largely deprived of them. . . .
>
> We can afford no further space for study of this subject because its bearings and details should be clear enough to the student. We are inclined to think that herein lies a most important consideration for the treatment of offenders in any situation, especially if they are taken early. A deep psychological fact is involved when we consider the possibility of introducing mental activities which may win the day against less desirable ones. Difficult though this may be in handling offenders in a poor environment, as many probation officers know, yet the ideal is always worth striving for. The good mental activity, if suitable to the needs of the person, can frequently be calculated to drive out the bad which is not, by comparison, always of commanding interest. This should be a fruitful matter for consideration in all industrial schools and other institutions. The best possible way to prevent the growth of delinquent tendencies is to give the individual an equipment of better interests which may command his thoughts. The same principle works even in the treatment of defectives. In the best institutions for these unfortunates it is most noticeable that the development of satisfactory interests for them so commands their attention that they are not at all the criminalistic persons which they would be outside. The above few considerations do scant justice to this most important topic.

Keeping out the devil, then, is largely a matter of seeing that the premises are occupied by decent tenants. There are two aspects of this. The brain has not only to work, it must play also. Apart

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from the systematic discipline of the school and the shop there is a large amount of time during which it is left to its own devices. Mind control, the mastery of thoughts and their direction into useful channels is so much a matter of common sense that it would be useless to insist on it here. The methods concern the practical educator. Most prisons have schools, but the attendance is largely voluntary and they are seldom under the direction of skilled educators. But that is a separate chapter.

How about the mind of the prisoner at other times, when he is not working or occupied with physical exercise or sports? What is he to do when he is locked up in his cell and left to his own mental devices?

Supply him with good literature, you say. Yes, that is excellent. I suppose you know that most prisons forbid you to send a good book to a prisoner unless you buy a brand-new copy and have the publisher or dealer send it. I suppose you know that even our National Department of Justice has a rule according to which you cannot even send a Bible to an inmate of a Federal prison. If you mail it yourself it goes towards heating the building or perhaps to the junk dealer. But let us suppose that the inmate is abundantly provided with literature of the first water, Bibles, Shakespeares, Emersons, Dr. Watts' Hymns and tracts galore, as well as fiction and periodicals, what then?

All of these things have their value. But you know as well as I do that very little that one reads sticks; most of it is forgotten within an hour. You know that one may have his mind crammed with all the facts in the universe, may be a walking encyclopedia, and still be unable to carry on a consistent chain of thought. Consuming the thoughts of others is an act totally different from producing thoughts of one's own. You know the value placed in school on "composition writing." No matter how inferior the product, the effort to produce something is a fundamental principle in mental training.

I have in mind the matter of correspondence with prisoners. The writing of letters by the prisoner—and most of them have never been in the habit of writing letters—fills the same place as does composition writing in school. I want you to look on the letters you receive, no matter how illy expressed, as a distinct effort on the part of the writer to produce something, to think. They may not be filled with wisdom and logic, or be models of good grammar, spelling and expression, but they represent the efforts of a mind at work; their apparent emptiness at times does not indicate a feeble, but an untrained mind; they are often like the first efforts of a child to walk. What matter? I feel much more honored by the receipt of such an effort than by the most highly polished communication from a ready writer. The almost illegible scrawl of one of these "illiterati" is more to me than the handsomest typewritten letter. I value most of all the product of the

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man who has perhaps not written a letter for years. And I have often been impressed, as doubtless you have also, by the notable improvement many of these men make in course of time in expressing their thoughts, yes, in thinking also. That is one of the functions of letter writing, quite apart from the matter of instilling healthy ideals. You make the worst possible mistake by gauging these letters with a literary yardstick.

I quote on another page a letter from one of our most experienced and successful prison correspondents and recommend it for your consideration. In doing this I have no intention of leading you to infer that the method of this writer is the only one, and that those who cannot follow it have no role to play. There are those who have the faculty of inspiring hope and optimism; they are much more numerous than those who can carry out a definite program. Whatever the method followed, the result is beneficial; it helps the prisoner to keep his mind occupied with healthy thoughts and to train him in thinking and expressing; it does something to take down the "To Let" sign which is such an attraction to the evil spirit always looking for a dwelling.

The custom unhappily still prevails in most prisons of limiting the number of letters an inmate may write to one a week, or even to one a month, and of interfering in an unwarranted way in innocent correspondence. It is a distinctly pernicious, I may even say a criminal one. I say pernicious, because it takes from the prisoner one of the best means at his disposal for securing mental training; I say criminal, because the vast majority of the inmates of our prisons are there for offenses in no sense more heinous, more detrimental to the best interests of society, than the offense of setting up a blockade before the prisoner's mind and deliberately torpedoing any wholesome idea which seeks an entrance through the medium of legitimate correspondence. I say it is criminal, because the experience of years in such institutions as do not do it shows it to be wholly needless. Admitting the necessity of a reasonable censorship for the prevention of immoral correspondence, of correspondence detrimental to the writer or the recipient or the interests of the public, the unwarranted interference of some censors with not only innocent but beneficial correspondence is such as would land them in jail in no time did they attempt to exercise it elsewhere. I could quote you letters without end to the effect that prisoners who are trying to get an education, trying to fit themselves for a better life, are deliberately prevented from doing so by the acts of officials who are not by any means limited to the warden's office.

I have no intention of creating the impression that the prisoner, actual or in the making, is the only one who has a vacuum to be filled. How about your own vacuum? As far as I can see, there is a vanishing difference between "killing time" within prison walls and outside. Playing poker in prison and playing bridge outside

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belong to the same category. Picking pockets and picking flaws in your neighbor's character by idle gossip indulged in because you have nothing better to do do not differ markedly when measured by an ethical yardstick. Even if you do not do this, and I assume that you do not, still you waste time every day in trying to amuse yourself, or in idly letting your thoughts run wild when your mind might be filled with live interests, and not the least of these, a live interest in others less fortunate than yourself, who by your efforts might be awakened to some of the infinite possibilities of life.

How To Write To Prisoners

The following letter from one of our most successful and experienced members contains some suggestions which I think will be of help to those taking up this work for the first time.

I often see in the CRITIC that people undertaking to correspond with a prisoner fail to carry out their promise. Is this, do you think, because they do not know how to carry on a continuous correspondence? If it is of any use, may I give you my own method which may suggest ideas to some? People often say to me "What shall I write?" When I get a new correspondent I first of all impress him that all I know about him is that he needs a friend and if he will accept me I am desirous of becoming a true friend to him. I say that as he is a stranger to me I can only think good of him and shall continue to do so until he betrays that trust. If a person thinks well of us we try to live up to that opinion and after all this man may only be like thousands of others we meet every day and trust. Then I endeavor to find out what interests him most, whether he desires help in any special study or can suggest a definite line of correspondence. Generally there is a long time ahead and some special subject can be taken up. This need not be very obstruse or difficult, but just of interest, to form, as it were, a basis. Some have ideas, others not, and in that case I plan out something myself that is likely to be of benefit. Anyway, give the man a feeling that he has a true friend who cares what becomes of him, and send him some sunshine and hope. I find that the most illiterate men catch on to new and good ideas, and I have often been intensely surprised at this. It is no use judging a man's intellect by the style of his composition, etc. One has to read between the lines and decipher the thoughts which are indifferently expressed. Dig down and bring the highest and best you can out of a man. You will be surprised at the result to yourself and your man. It is an excellent training for both.

Another point I emphasize, that I am not out to supply money, but purely as a friend desiring to uplift and give him food for thought in his many lonely hours, endeavoring in a true spirit of brotherhood to make him get a better viewpoint of his life. By doing this I try to make him see that there is more in life than he has seen so far and that when he regains his liberty he will make better use of it than before. I send books and papers when I can and at all times try to imagine myself in the man's place and realizing his disadvantages and oftentimes lack of knowledge of the better side of life. As in everything else practice makes perfect and fluency in writing comes with practice too. I know it brings much pleasure on both sides.

Members admitted to the LEAGUE, two weeks ending April 21st; prisoners, 84; outsiders, 65. Registered membership number, April 21st, 7,424.

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Correspondents Wanted For Illiterate Prisoners

We receive many applications for correspondents from prisoners whose education has been neglected and who are therefore not good writers. Some of these have to dictate their letters to others. It by no means follows that these men are otherwise deficient; on the contrary many are very intelligent and have shown wonderful improvement since we have known them. We hesitate to assign these men to new members, many of whom demand fairly well educated inmates, and who are easily discouraged and drop them without notifying us.

We invite offers to take up these men. Some ability to help with English and letter writing is useful, but is not insisted on. All we require is patience and a sympathetic understanding of the man who has had no opportunities.

We also need correspondents for colored prisoners, and such as can write Italian or German.

Answers To Correspondents—By Our Goat

Mrs. Dora D.—Of course your prisoner did not reply to your letter. You admit having told him that no one but the Lord could save him. I suppose he has taken the hint and is spending his letter writing hour in prayer—and incidentally saving his postage money for tobacco.

Mr. J. S. T.—To reply to your assertion that you think that the LEAGUE *is* engaged in some sort of propaganda, when I have positively assured you that it *is not,* would not be answering your question, but simply putting myself in the position of attempting to demonsrate to you that I am not a liar. I was once foolish enough to waste time in self-defense, but other things now demand my attention and I suggest that the time you spend in harboring suspicions that some one whom you never heard of might be infected with opinions of which you know nothing would better be spent in helping a prisoner. These are days that call for action, not for debate.

Mr. J. D. O.— ——— Prison. In reply to your request that we secure you a single young lady as a correspondent, I beg to state that your censor informs me that you are already equipped with a wife, three grown daughters and a mother-in-law. Don't you think these ladies should absorb your privilege of writing one letter a month? I do, but if you will give me their addresses, I'll undertake to get them to write to you—especially the mother-in-law.

A Good Reason For Buying Books From Us

As an accommodation to purchasers, theosophical, occult and new thought books *which have been bought from us* and which the purchaser does not wish to keep will in general be taken back on a rental basis, *provided they are on our rental list;* that is, the purchaser will be credited with the full amount paid, less the rental charges for the time they have been kept, and this credit may be used for buying or renting other books. This does not apply to books bought elsewhere, nor to books not on our rental lists. Other rental books may be taken back on the same terms.

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Mailing Envelopes For The Critic

The LEAGUE owes a bill of $98 for its last lot of 50,000 mailing envelopes for the CRITIC, which must be met presently. This is one of the periodical and unpleasant necessities which causes us many pangs. Which of our members will help toward settling it?

Important

New members, both prisoners and others, are advised that a little personal information will help greatly in selecting suitable correspondents. Many members have no one to blame but themselves for unsatisfactory results when they leave us without the least basis for selection. Some applicants are so chary of information that we are unable to tell whether they are men of twenty-one or women of seventy. Women, especially, neglect to tell their age. We should know this, at least approximately, and assure them that it will be treated as confidential. It helps us mightily, and it is not too late to report it.

Statement of the Ownership and Management of The O. E. Library Critic for April 1, 1917.

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The owners are The O. E. Library League, a philanthropic association, not incorporated; H. N. Stokes, Editor and Librarian.

Known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders; none.

(Signed) H. N. STOKES, *Editor.*

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 16th day of April, 1917.

(Signed) FRANK B. TIPTON, *Notary Public.*

My commission expires November 8th, 1921.

THE O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE

Headquarters: 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

List No. 2] Theosophy

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Walker, E. D.—Reincarnation, a Study of Forgotten Truth, $1.00.
The standard work on reincarnation in history, religion and literature.

Ward, A. H.—Masonic Symbolism, $0.75.
The Seven Rays of Development, $0.50.
The Threefold Way, paper, sold only, $0.25.

Wedgwood, J. I.—Meditation for Beginners, paper, $0.25.
Varieties of Psychism, with preface by Mrs. Besant, $0.60.

Westcott, W. Wynn—Divine Pymander of Hermes, $1.00.
Euphrates, or the Waters of the East, $1.00.
Introduction to the Study of the Kabalah, $1.25.
Numbers, their Occult Power and Mystic Virtues, $1.25.
Sepher Yetzirah, $1.00.

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Whyte, G. H.—Is Theosophy Anti-Christian?, paper, $0.25.
H. P. Blavatsky, an Outline of her Life, $0.50.
The Great Teachers, $0.50.
Wodehouse, E. A.—A World Expectant, $1.00.
Reasons for expecting a great teacher.
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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

Published biweekly at 1207 Q St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. VI **Wednesday, May 16, 1917** **No. 20**

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PUNISHMENT ON SUSPICION

The "Novello bill" is a bill before the New York State Legislature which requires that the time which a suspected—but as yet unconvicted—person spends in jail awaiting trial shall, if he is found guilty, be deducted from the term imposed by the court under the laws providing imprisonment for a specified time. Further the bill is retroactive; it provides that all persons now serving terms in New York prisons shall have their time reduced by the time they have spent in jail before final sentence.

This might seem to the average person a mere technicality, but it is far from it; it is a very vital matter. Read the following quotation from a letter written to Mr. Novello by a convict in Clinton Prison. It is not an isolated case; it applies with more or less force to every convict in a New York prison, yes, further, to every convict in every penitentiary in the United States who has been held in confinement awaiting the decision of the court.

In 1910-11 I spent six months in the A——— County Jail awaiting my first trial for manslaughter.

In 1912-13 I spent twelve months in the A——— County Jail awaiting the decision of the Appellate Division, from a second conviction of same.

In 1914-15 I spent nine months in the G——— County Jail at C——— (Change of Venue), awaiting the decision of the Court of Appeals from a third conviction of the same.

A total of two years and three months actual imprisonment for which the present status makes no allowance.

Being a first offender I was given the full minimum that manslaughter, second degree, calls for, i. e., seven years.

This man is therefore imprisoned and deprived of liberty and the pursuit of happiness, to say nothing else, for a period nearly one-third longer than the law calls for. Whether his jail period had been one month or five years would make not the least difference—he has to serve his penitentiary sentence of seven years.

One would think that when a man is arrested and taken from his ordinary pursuits on suspicion that he has committed a crime, he should be entitled to have his innocence or guilt established without delay, so far as such a thing is possible. If innocent, he should be allowed to go about his business, if guilty, subjected to a penalty not exceeding that provided by law. Theoretically this is true, but

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there are various obstacles in its way. The state needs to collect evidence, a matter often requiring considerable time. Detectives and other officers have to hunt up those who may be able to throw light on the question on the witness stand. The prosecuting attorney, who is supposed to represent justice, but who is too often simply a hireling whose business it is to secure conviction if in any way possible, and whose future political prospects depend upon his doing so, needs ample time to arrange his material and to make it appear as damning as possible. The accused himself requires time to prepare his defense. As we know, the prosecuting attorney is as a rule so busy sending others to prison that he simply cannot drop everything for this one case.

Then, too, the courts have their regular sessions; they are fond of long vacations. There are seldom enough courts to attend to business promptly, so the suspect has to await his turn for trial.

In general the law provides that the suspect, upon giving bond to appear in court, commonly known as bail, may be allowed his liberty pending trial. It is within the power of the court to make this security pretty much anything, or to refuse it entirely, and to require detention. There are few cases in which one may not retain his liberty if he can scrape together sufficient bond. Bonds cost money; the man must either have the means of supplying it himself, or friends who will do so. If it is impossible to raise the money, or if the court refuses to accept it, he has no alternative but to sit in jail till the court gets ready to try him, and this period often amounts to many months. Then comes the trial, and if there is an appeal, a still longer time in jail. The result is that he has often to spend much more than a year in jail before the matter is settled and he is either finally acquitted or sentenced to the penitentiary.

If he is convicted, what does he get? He gets a penitentiary sentence, a term prescribed by law, often with more or less latitude allowed to the judge, but in nearly every case with an irreducible minimum allowed if he is a first offender or if there are palliating circumstances, but which cannot be diminished by one second for all the time he has been held under suspicion, and taking no account of it. The state gives him absolutely no credit for all this time spent in jail. Why does the judge take no account of this? The answer is simple enough—the law does not authorize him to do so. It is not the business of the judge to make the law but to see that it is carried out. The law says that he who *has been found guilty* of a certain offense *shall be* imprisoned for so many years. It takes no account of the past confinement.

So far as the culprit is concerned, the time spent in jail awaiting trial is scarcely to be distinguished from that spent in the penitentiary, except that it is punishment on suspicion, and in advance of conviction. It is true that as he has not been convicted he can-

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not be compelled to labor under laws calling for penal servitude. He is not yet a slave of the state. But he is still subject to the brutalities of officials, is liable to be bullied and practically tortured with the object of extorting a confession. Jail life is often worse than life in the penitentiary, for while the penitentiary is the property of a large community and is more or less controlled by its better intelligence, the jail is a local affair, managed by a small community and by petty officials, and is less subject to the force of public opinion. It is a notorious fact that disciplinary and sanitary conditions in jails are usually far below the level of those of the penitentiaries in the same state. Whether it is worse or better is not the question. It is depriving him who is not as yet convicted by due process of law of the right of every citizen to make the best use of his life; it is a direct violation of the principle that no one shall suffer punishment unless convicted by a court; it is, I repeat, not punishment on conviction, but punishment on suspicion.

It may be frankly admitted that it is unavoidable, that there are those whose promise to appear in court is worthless, even if backed by security, and who would avail themselves of the opportunity to escape justice. But that does not alter in the least the fact that when the law provides a definite penalty for a specified offense it is the grossest injustice to go beyond this, that confinement either before or after sentence amounts to precisely the same thing, and that therefore it should be the total period, including pre-trial confinement, which should count in the sentence. That this is universally disregarded is not evidence that our present system is just, but that the public in its efforts to defend itself against aggression pays but little regard to the rights of the accused.

Nor is this all. Assuming that the guilty person is given due credit for the time spent in jail, how about the man whom the court finds innocent? He too has served his time of months or years in confinement, he is taken away from his legitimate pursuits, his business, if he has one, interfered with, possibly ruined, his family left to shift for itself, the stigma of imprisonment placed upon him. And all this on mere suspicion! And for this the state does not grant him one cent of indemnity. Any man may be suspected; any man may, through mere accident, through the action of malicious people, through the lack of friends, through being a stranger or having an unfortunate, questionable or unknown record behind him become the object of suspicion. He is not to blame and if he is innocent he should not be made to suffer. If the officers of the law make a mistake the public should bear the entire consequences, and this should include full and complete indemnity for all loss which he has suffered. The verdict of the court, "Not guilty," will not replace one iota of the damage which he has sustained. It is the duty of every man to suffer for the state, for his country, if need be. But it is equally the duty of the state to bear the

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consequences of suffering unjustly and mistakenly inflicted. We pay pensions to those who have suffered in the defense of the nation against aggression, as well as to their survivors, but there is not a nickel forthcoming to those equally innocent men whom we have punished on suspicion in our efforts to protect ourselves against attack from within. No community can justly demand service from its individual members unless it, in turn, in the course of securing justice, in securing self-protection, is ready to do justice to the individual who is made to suffer for the offenses of others.

The method by which the accused is allowed to give bond to appear in court and to retain his freedom pending trial would be a just one if it could be impartially administered. It is unjust in that it makes the possession of money or friends, or the ability to command them, a factor. Unquestionably the temptation of him who is friendless and penniless to flee from justice must be much greater than that of him who has money and friends to lose. But unless poverty is in itself a crime, no distinction should be made between the man with means and the man without; unless to be without wealthy or influential friends is a sin, rather than a misfortune, it is an injustice to the friendless man to make him suffer therefor. There can be no system of justice based on the possession of friends and means and influence. Justice is impartiality to all alike.

I frankly admit that I do not see how it is possible to treat all alike. If the suspected person is able to provide adequate security he should be permitted to do so except in aggravated cases. But how about the man who is not? I do not see how the state could advance the security in such cases as it would simply be transferring money from one pocket to the other. But this much is clear, that if the state cannot allow such persons to run free pending trial it can at least do them the justice of reimbursing them for their sufferings if found innocent and of crediting them with them if found guilty. Suffering in the form of punishment on suspicion is a debt to the individual incurred by the state. It should be paid, no matter what the cost, no matter how it runs counter to our notions and our precedents. To work ourselves into a fine frenzy over the horrors inflicted on foreigners in the course of this war, to talk of the crime of driving innocent people into slavery, all this is mere sham when we do not open our eyes to the abuses against personal rights and liberty enacted in our midst every day, because we are too thoughtless, too indifferent and selfish to provide the needful legal remedy.

Justice was once determined by combat; the man with the biggest biceps, he with the greatest skill with the sword, won his case in the presence of the judge. Of course nobody even in those days believed that might and skill constitute justice. But there was a notion that God stood behind the combatant who had right on his side, strengthened his muscles, directed his efforts. It was an

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application of the "Gott mit uns" principle. So, today, we act on the principle that when the innocent man is unable to provide bail, to pay for adequate defense against the attacks of a legal assassin in the form of a prosecuting attorney, God will look out for him. It needs no evidence to prove that such is not the case, that justice does not proceed from above, but from within ourselves. It is one of these cases that the Novello bill is designed to meet. Let us hope that the general awakening of the nation to a sense of justice will cover the points which I have reviewed, not only in New York, but in every state of the Union.

Note. It is suggested by the inmate of Clinton Prison, whose letter I have quoted, that every citizen of New York state who reads this should write to his or her representative in the Legislature at Albany, urging the passage of the Novello bill. A list of such assemblymen and senators can be found in the New York World almanac, page 771.

Can Ex-Prisoners Serve in the Army or Navy?

Having had numerous inquiries and suggestions regarding the eligibility of paroled or discharged prisoners for service in the Army or Navy, I have made direct inquiry with the following result:

WAR DEPARTMENT
The Adjutant General's Office
Washington, April 28, 1917

Mr. H. N. Stokes, Editor
Dear Sir:—

In response to your letter of the 17th instant in which you state that you have numerous inquiries from penitentiary inmates about to be discharged requesting information as to whether or not they are eligible for military service, I beg to inform you that the enlistment or acceptance with a view to enlistment of prisoners who have been in prison under sentence of a court in a reformatory, jail or penitentiary is prohibited.

Very respectfully,

ROBERT C. DAVIS,
Adjutant General

I am also officially informed that while it is not a matter of legislative enactment "it is contrary to the policy of the Navy Department to accept men who have been convicted of any serious offense."

Incidentally, however, it may be mentioned that according to a late announcement of the War Department the wardens of jails, penitentiaries and reformatories will register all inmates who are within the age limits required by the conscription law.

While space does not permit of argument, I consider that the above rules excluding ex-convicts from service irrespective of the nature of their offense are wholly arbitrary and unjust. No matter how big a rascal a man may be, no matter how many people he may have swindled, how many girls he may have seduced, no matter what dishonest, immoral, indecent, mean, low acts he may have committed, provided only he has not been caught and sentenced for them, he is able to bear arms for his country. But, he who has

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been punished for an offense which in no way bears on his patriotism, his sincerity and his dependableness, who has paid his debt to society for it—the same debt that many a man is shirking—he must stay at home.

"Your country needs you!" Yes, it needs you, but it has not yet reached the point, as other nations have, of seeing that a man's past may be buried. There is no shortage of men in America at present. Perhaps the time may come. Canada is already considering the question.

In the meantime, those ex-prisoners as well as present inmates who are moved by patriotism should remember that the war is not going to be won in the trenches or on the sea alone, but as well in the shop, on the farm, wherever production is needed. There is plenty to be done and men are needed to do it. The fact of having done time is no disqualification here; it will not stand against him who is resolved to make good. And those who are still in prison and who are engaged in productive employment should remember that by doing their work faithfully and to the best of their ability and by looking on it as an act of patriotism rather than as a task performed under compulsion, they will be rendering just as valuable service as by standing up and being shot at.

The Joliet Prison Post.

The following letter from the management of *The Joliet Prison Post* explains itself. I publish it with the hope of aiding this excellent prison magazine, which is published quarterly at one dollar a year:

Dear Doctor Stokes:—

THE JOLIET PRISON POST, of which a copy was recently mailed you, is in dire need of new subscribers. As you perhaps know, the State makes no provision for the financial maintenance of our paper and our funds are derived solely from advertising and subscriptions.

Will you kindly send us such parts of your mailing list as will give us the names and addresses of those good people to whom we could send a sample copy and in that manner perhaps interest them in our work. We are not seeking donations, but think that your people would enjoy and appreciate the efforts of our little magazine to the extent of favoring us with their subscription.

Thanking you for your assistance and assuring you of our appreciation for your kind co-operation, we remain,

Yours very truly,
THE JOLIET PRISON POST
P. A. Crumbly
Business Manager

It is against our rule to give out names on our mailing list. but we have more than five hundred members who are in correspondence with inmates of the Joliet Prison and I suggest that these either drop a post card to the manager, asking for sample copies, or that they request their inmate correspondents to have

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them sent. The address is *1900 Collins Street, Joliet, Ills.* Others can get samples at the cost of a post card. If you are a LEAGUE member, mention it.

To Our Joliet Prison Members

You have read the above letter from the Manager of your magazine, *The Joliet Prison Post.* You can help the paper by having sample copies sent to your correspondents. See the Manager about it in time, so that it can be sent out with the regular second-class mail at the one-cent-a pound rate.

Members admitted to the LEAGUE, two weeks ending May 5th: prisoners, 87; outsiders, 71. Registered membership number, May 5th, 7,584.

Write Your Own Letters

I have frequently observed that prisoners who are not ready with the pen get a fellow inmate to write their first letter to me, asking for a correspondent. I understand why this is. It is the same feeling as prompts one to put on his Sunday clothes when going into company. Besides I know that many a man would have to leave the letter unwritten if he had to write it himself.

It is a mistake, however, for those who can write their own letters not to do so. Correspondents are often vexed and disappointed when they find the following letters not up to the style of the first, or if they see, as they cannot help seeing, that they are not the same handwriting, and they think they are being imposed on. It really does not matter how poorly written or expressed the letters may be; nobody is going to ridicule or despise them. We want the men to come to us in their everyday clothes, not gotten up for the occasion.

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. VI Wednesday, May 30, 1917 No. 21

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE GRAVES OF OUR DOLLARS

The King of France, with forty thousand men,
Marched up a hill, and then—marched down again.
—*Mother Goose*

A dead lion is better than a live dog.
—*Old Saws Reset*

May 30th is the day set apart for honoring the memory of those who have given their lives for our country. Every newspaper will write of it and every orator will have his say. I agree with them wholly; it is a beautiful custom and one full of inspiration, especially at the present time. But what interests me more is, what will be our thoughts on Decoration Day a year hence? Will there be fresh graves on which to place flowers? Will there be speeches and salutes in honor of those who are buried in foreign nds or in the seas, or shall we have to limit ourselves to holding ır celebration over the graves of our departed dollars?

We need another national holiday—perhaps it might well be consolidated with Thanksgiving Day—for decorating the graves of our deceased notions. A good many of these have passed away of late. One is the notion that America needs not trouble itself about a foreign invasion; that an army would spring up over night if we were threatened. We all know what killed that—it has been talked to death in Congress. Another is that the great war is no concern of ours; that all we have to do is to remain "neutral" and gather in the shekels sweated out in the agony of Europe; that liberty and human rights are none of our business unless they concern us directly and not even then if the cost is high. Then there is the notion that Great Britain is fighting for nothing but selfish motives. We heard plenty of that talk not so long ago. But now we have at least come to the point of admitting that we intend to fight for the same things England is fighting for. And one more notion we may well hope to see laid to rest, the idea that we are taking a glorious part in the war by making huge loans to the allies and supplying them with food—loans made at a respectable rate of interest and which are to be paid back to us, food sold to them at its market value—all of which are nothing but business, and which,

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however much desired by them, hardly reflect more credit on us than any other respectable banking or mercantile transactions.

An army over night? At the present rate it looks as if we should follow the example of that king of France who, with forty thousand men, marched up a hill only to march down again, even if it gets as far as marching up. We are going to have a huge army, complete to the last shoestring and coat button, ready to appear on the scene when the war is over and take part in the shouting or possibly join in the parade Unter den Linden, and then return home and be mustered out. It is fifty-four days since the "war" started and where is the army? Not a shot has been fired and hardly a squad prepared to fire it.

I am not sneering; it is pathetic enough, but it is the result of our past folly. We are doing the best we can. One might well ask why Congress, instead of haggling for weeks over the military age limits should not have taken any old limits, just so as to get the thing started and then amend them later if necessary. The layman does not see the difficulties, but he does see that there are going to be difficulties in any event and that what is called for is cutting the Gordian knot, not untying it. But so far it has been a "merry war." There has not been the least touch of real sacrifice. The whole country is playing soldier and every one is having the time of his life. Society has taken it up. Those who had formerly to be content with golf and motoring and horse and dog shows are now busy with Red Cross work. Girls who would shriek at the sight of a live mouse are dressing in khaki, living in tents and training for something. The boys are playing at gardener instead of ball. And everybody is waving flags and boiling over with patriotism in one form or another and preparing to make sacrifices when the big machine gets into operation.

All of which is splendid, but it should not delude us as to its true nature. So far it is just a big picnic. We are learning tremendous lessons in organization and efficiency in every direction. But does it not occur to you that the majority of these demonstrations are not necessarily war measures, but just everyday commonsense for peace times? What is efficiency? Why, efficiency is just making a given amount of energy produce the greatest practical result. To cease fooling away one's time over trifles, to stop wasting food, to stop using five locomotives and trains where four will do the work as well, to take lessons in first aid to the wounded, to plant gardens on vacant city lots formerly given over to weeds, tin cans and poster boards, to save the waste paper and use it over, to live in the open air and subject oneself to systematic drilling; all of these things are just common-sense for all times, war or no war; if they are preparing for war they are equally preparing for peace; they can hardly be called sacrifice. On the whole we are getting a huge amount of enjoyment as well as profit out of our "war" so far.

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Of course it is only the beginning. When will the real sacrifice begin—the sacrifice which means discomfort, not enjoyment? The first will be when the war tax measures go into operation. Then we shall see what sort of stuff we are made of. We all know what a just and equitable tax is; it is the kind of tax which the other fellow pays and which does not touch us, or which we can dodge if we like, but which benefits us as much as the one who pays it. Just as soon as a new tax measure is proposed, the trains to Washington are filled with those who are prepared to prove to Congress that their business will be ruined and that it is much better to ruin the other fellow. Each of us figures out whether the new tax will touch us, and feels a thrill of joy second only to his patriotism when he finds he will not have to contribute. Each of us thinks, when he sees that some commodity is to be taxed; "Well, I can try to get along with a little less of that."

I wonder how many of us can truthfully say, when he has to pay a few cents more for this or that because of the war tax: "Thank God, here is something I can do for my country!" I wonder how many of us will form the resolution to stint ourselves, if we have to do so, not on taxed, but on untaxed commodities, so that the Government can get the benefit.

Here is a form of patriotism which is not half so agreeable or conspicuous as waving flags and volunteering to do this or that sort of work, but it is a form which every one can practice, silently, without having to leave his house or his office. Think it over. Money is the sinews of war. How can I help the Government to raise money? If I am obliged to economize, how can I do so without cutting off my little share which should go to the Government?

Of course there is going to be a lot of swindling. The consumer always pays the tax and generally much more. Unscrupulous people—respectable pickpockets, in fact—will make a levy of ten per cent an excuse for charging twenty or fifty per cent more and pocketing the difference. The movie man who has to turn in one cent on each ten-cent ticket will want fifteen cents, an increase of fifty per cent, and will tell you that making change in coppers instead of nickels is beyond the ability of his brain. Every sort of excuse will be made for robbing the public. Such things should be resented and when possible suppressed.

We are suffering from a jitney superstition. By that I mean that there is a notion abroad that there is something mean or petty in jumping prices by less than five cents at a time, and in objecting if this is not done. It is a superstition sedulously cultivated by the small retailers for their own benefit. We have a very respectable coin, made largely of copper and of the value of one fifth of a jitney. The new taxes will affect the great majority of small purchases to the extent of a fraction of a cent, or perhaps a cent or

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two. With all our preaching on economy, what we need as much as anything else is a movement in favor of the copper cent, an attack on the superstition that prices must of necessity be multiples of five. There are plenty of coppers; the Government will coin as many as the public demands, and it should demand them. There is nothing impracticable in their use; the largest department stores handle them and make a point of splitting the nickel. Let us have a campaign in favor of the copper cent; let us have clubs which will pledge themselves to patronize dealers who will advance prices only to the extent of the tax and no more, and who will keep on hand a stock of pennies sufficient to give the exact change; and to boycott those who do not.

Remember this. The new revenue measures call for an average annual levy of about $30 per capita. This is less than ten cents a day. You cannot help paying part of this and you should not try to evade any of it, but you will probably be swindled out of as much more by pocket-picking tradesmen working the jitney superstition. Suppose you could stop this plundering and turn the money over to the Government for the prosecution of the war. Imagine what a revenue it would produce!

It may seem a trivial matter to speak of, but of late there is a mania for patriotic stickers on letters. It looks very fine to adorn your missive and incidentally show your patriotism by sticking an American flag on your envelope. But what are you doing? You are simply indicating what nobody doubts, that you are full of patriotism. But if you want to manifest it you will not buy stickers gotten out for the personal benefit of the printer and stationer, and that is all they are. You will buy Red Cross stickers, or any other kind the proceeds from which are to be devoted to patriotic objects, not to swelling the bank accounts of individuals. The Government should keep such stickers on sale at every postoffice and advertise them conspicuously. The postage on letters is to be raised to three cents; it is an involuntary tax, justified by the circumstances. But why not leave room for small voluntary contributions? You can buy a liberty bond if you have the money, but there is not a single way provided by which one of our hundred million Americans can cast his mite into the treasury. A specially designed patriotic three-cent stamp, sold at say three-and-a-quarter or three-and-a-half cents, would advertise your enthusiasm to your friends and relatives as effectively as the most gorgeous sticker, *and the War Chest would get it.* Even if the Government should not adopt such a plan—probably it will not—then you can make your small donation by occasionally sticking an extra postage stamp on a letter. Don't be afraid; the money will go to the right place—it is not the postoffice as such, but the United States Treasury which gets the cash; it will help to buy bullets for the hearts of our enemies. And if you don't write letters, you can buy the stamps and burn them.

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Every stamp is a receipt from the Government for so much money in exchange for future service. If you destroy the stamp, it means donating the money.

"A live dog is better than a dead lion." That is the motto of the slacker. I do not think it needful to refer to our patriotism in the matter of sacrificing our lives. When we get worked up to it we shall be just as patriotic as any other nation; there are evidences enough of this. There is evidence enough that another year of war will give us abundant opportunity to shed our tears. Why moralize about it. What I am most concerned with at the present moment is that while we are indulging in the more obvious manifestations of patriotism, we do not overlook this matter of tax-dodging; that while we are denouncing those who try to evade military or other forms of service we do not ourselves give way to that most common and subtle of all kinds of slacking, even though it be not in a positively dishonest form. May the next Decoration Day see each of us in the position to look on our departed dollars with as little regret, with the same feelings as we shall think of our soldiers and sailors, and with the added feeling that it is we ourselves who have made the sacrifice. We are far too prone to indulge in that form of sacrifice by proxy which consists in taking the credit to ourselves, of feeling our hearts swell over what others have done or are doing. It is a rank kind of self-deception, a sort of moral theft. It is only when we have done something ourselves that we can claim the least credit. It is better by far to have done our own little bit to the extent of a few dollars or cents, silently, than to indulge in the most exuberant emotions over what others have done. The nation needs your enthusiasm, it is true, but it needs that sort of enthusiasm which leads to personal sacrifice, not the cheap kind which leads to display but ends in nothing. "By their fruits shall ye know them."

Decoration Day, 1917.

Wanted—Correspondents For Colored Prisoners

We always have a long waiting list of colored prisoners who have asked for correspondents, a list which we have not been able to reduce materially notwithstanding our frequent appeals. These men are never assigned to correspondents without express permission.

While we know that many members, perhaps most, object to writing to colored men, it may be stated that in general they make faithful correspondents.

Who will volunteer? _____

Members admitted to the LEAGUE, two weeks ending May 19th: prisoners, 106; outsiders, 53. Registered membership number, May 19th, 7,748.

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More Publicity Needed

The many activities connected with the war are likely to distract the attention of our old members and to interfere with our getting new ones. For this reason it is to be hoped that those who feel that the prisoners should not be forgotten in the stress of other matters will use increased efforts to draw attention to our work.

Our experience has been that short letters to newspapers, especially those in the cities which have large circulation, produce the best results. If we could get as many as a dozen inquiries daily it would serve to keep us just about abreast of the demand from the prisons. Write to your local papers, or to any others. We shall be pleased to supply a list of leading dailies to any member who will undertake to write to them about the LEAGUE.

Letter From A Prisoner

The following is from a letter written to a member by a prisoner. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the officials of this institution are so opposed to the inmates being benefitted in this way that they will not allow one of them to communicate in any way with the Editor of the CRITIC, no matter what his desires may be. We get hundreds of letters of the same tenor.

I entered here broken in spirit, no prospects, without ambition, and the future in darkness. Then one day I heard about Dr. Stokes and his League. I wrote to him asking for a correspondent, and he gave me you for my correspondent, and as time rolled on and we got better acquainted your letters gave me renewed vigor, hope and cheer, until now I am able to say that I will leave here armed with the strongest weapon, consisting of an unalterable determination to succeed, a controllable will power, both of which will lead me on to the accomplishment of my ambition, "to make good." Sounds like a sermon, don't it, but it is just plain facts.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK.....

for .....

$5.00	50 cts.
$4.00	40 cts.
$3.00	30 cts.
$2.00	25 cts.
$1.00	20 cts.
75 cts.	15 cts.
60 cts.	10 cts.
.....	____

Name and Address.....

.....

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To Prison Wardens

There is a tendency in some institutions to hold our LEAGUE responsible for things which a little thought would show could hardly be laid at our door. An inmate of a certain prison recently escaped and we were blamed with having aided it, through one of our members. As we never heard of the prisoner mentioned, and as the LEAGUE has an outside membership of about 2,500, all reputable and law-abiding citizens, out of a population of one hundred millions, of all sorts and conditions, isn't it rather unlikely? And in any event, isn't it better to put the matter frankly and squarely up to us, if you have suspicions, so that we can sift the matter and give you whatever information we have, rather than to blame without inquiry a movement which has been of the greatest aid to thousands of prisoners in the way of helping them to make good? We are just as much interested as you are in maintaining prison discipline and we think it no more just to blame us than it would be to blame you, if a man gets away. Our ideal is cooperation with the authorities, not opposition.

The Wyoming Pen

This is a supplement to our list of prison papers which is sent to all new members of the LEAGUE. The reasons the WYOMING PEN was not included in that list are two,—the CRITIC did not know of the WYOMING PEN, and the WYOMING PEN did not know of the CRITIC. Now that the mutual oversight has been remedied we hasten to take off our hat to the editor, who, by the way, is an Indian, and if we do not say more at this moment it is because our printer is calling for copy.

The WYOMING PEN is the youngest of the prison magazines and while still too young to compete in literary and typographic respects with some of its larger and older colleagues, it has a fine ability behind it which is worthy of all encouragement and which we believe will develop into something fine if given a chance. There is a certain vigor and cowboy style about it which are most refreshing.

The price is 15 cents a copy, or $1.50 a year, and we are pleased to note that tobacco coupons will be accepted in lieu of cash, a point we wish to impress on some of our members who appear to have been receiving it free. It needs the money and should get it. These members should pay for it.

The address is *Box 407, Rawlins, Wyoming.*

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but

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BY

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE BLASÉ PHILANTHROPIST

But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.
—Saint Paul

It is a fact which may appear unfortunate, but for which there is without doubt a good and sufficient reason, that the Builder of the Universe has so constructed things that weariness follows just as surely an excess of well doing as of evil doing. Not only does pleasure pall in the long run just as surely as pain, but the same is true of those higher sorts of pleasure which may be regarded as intellectual, ethical or spiritual in their nature. The soul as well as the body demands change. Do you need illustrations of this? It is a well-known fact that one can become bored with the grosser pleasures of life. Nobody has yet invented the amusement, no matter how harmless, which one does not tire of if persisted in too strenuously and persistently—unless it be baseball. We often assume that this condition of exhaustion, of boredom, is evidence that the blasé man has been doing something wrong. It is not so. There is a kind of divine Katzenjammer as well as the ordinary variety. If you read the lives of the saints you will find that excess of devotion, of exaltation to the seventh heaven of adoration, is alternated with fits of depression, of being cut off from the divine radiation. The higher the exaltation, so much deeper the ensuing gloom. Everybody knows that the spiritual excesses accompanying a religious revival are likely to be followed by a relapse. The religious drunk is alternated with one of the other kind. It is even claimed by some, and the view is a plausible one, that the soul wearies of the pleasures of heaven and ultimately seeks relief by return to earth and its coarser sensations. It is a most plausible theory, because it is based on indisputable facts of human nature. The "perpetual feast of nectared sweets, where no crude surfeit reigns" is a dream of the poet which corresponds to no reality, so far as we are concerned. You, who talk of the everlasting joys of heaven, cannot sit through three hours of the divinest music without getting tired and finding relief in the noises of the street. Built as you are an eternity of the "joys of heaven," as usually pictured, would be a horrible punishment.

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One can overdo being a saint just as surely as being a sinner, and if one is not careful the results are likely to be quite as disastrous. We allow ourselves certain delusions, such as that he who is following the right path has the support of the powers above and may venture into as great an excess as he chooses, and this notwithstanding the patent fact that one may work himself to death in a good cause just as quickly as in a bad one; that sinners who take good care of their bodies live just as long as saints, and that saints who neglect the laws of nature die as soon, and with as much suffering, as others. Spending more than you get results in bankruptcy, whether you are spending with good or evil motives, whether you are spending physically, mentally, or spiritually. The spiritual debauchee is as prone to paralysis of the spirit as the physical debauchee is to physical paralysis.

The advice of Saint Paul, "Be not weary in well doing," has a double meaning—do not tire of well doing, and, do not persist in well doing until you weary of it. While we assume that the apostle meant the first, the second is of equal importance. A disregard of it is the cause of the blasé philanthropist. Fortunately there is another law, a law of accommodation, which makes it possible to adapt oneself in time to that which would at the outset exhaust. In course of time habits are formed which make almost uninterrupted action possible. We all know that a muscle becomes fatigued and requires rest. But there are muscles which have duties imposed on them which do not permit of repose. Have you ever thought of that marvellous muscle, the heart, which thumps away for seventy years, never stopping? How can it do so? The fact is, it has learned to do without rest. The heart fibre, it is true, differs in certain respects from that of other muscles, but the physical and chemical processes are essentially the same. But in the course of evolution and through force of necessity it has learned to keep repair abreast of waste, so that it needs never to stop.

The resolution not to weary in well doing is doubtless commendable, but it is futile. You just cannot help yourself any more than you can help getting physically tired. You are subject to certain limitations and might as well recognize them at the outset. It is only in the course of ages that the soul can learn to keep pace with constant work; it must have its periods of rest until it acquires the habit of simultaneous work and recuperation, like the heart. The best of us are so bored with a life of constant service that we look forward with joy to our imagined heaven of eternal rest.

It is said that he who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God. It is quite true, but it is equally true of him who keeps thinking of the time when his work will be finished and he may turn to rest or diversion. What is this kingdom of God? The ancients thought of the state of the gods as one of eternal rest, sitting about on Olympus and sipping nectar,

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and we moderns picture much the same sort of kingdom. We are wrong. Among other things the kingdom of God is a kingdom of incessant work; it is a condition pictured by our own heart muscles. It has been said that "the heart of being is celestial rest." On the contrary, it is eternal activity—peace in action, not peace in repose. The closer you come to the heart of Being the more do you find this to be the case. Consider the placid sunbeams—billions of vibrations a second. Consider the atom, once thought to be as inert as a lump of lead, but now known to be the scene of tremendous internal energy and activity. To be laid on the shelf, to be a back number, no longer taking one's part in the great work, that is a sorry ideal for the kingdom of God.

But this is far in the future for us. We cannot talk of not looking back; we cannot think ourselves fit for the divine kingdom of incessant work. We are all subject to boredom, and the question is not more, how to keep working than how to work without being bored. The blasé philanthropist is common enough. Everywhere one meets those who have taken up some form of service with the utmost enthusiasm, thinking "Now I have found my life's work," only to tire and drop it for something else. In fact it may be set down as almost a rule that he who begins a work with growing ardor, knowing nothing of its difficulties, of its demands for persistence and self-denial, is likely to peter out and turn to something else. He is in love with his own emotions of enthusiasm, but with his work, with the determination to accomplish something in spite of difficulties—no.

I have learned in my work to distrust people who are very enthusiastic at the outset. It is not enthusiasm which counts, valuable as it may be, but persistence. Formerly I thought there must be something wrong with the work when I saw so many falling by the wayside who had fairly boiled over with enthusiasm before they knew what they were undertaking. Now I see that the fault is not with the work but with those who undertake it. All reform work, no matter what its nature, is a fight against obstacles. The world is not crying out to be reformed; quite the contrary. If it were, it would take care of itself. Everything which means the betterment of the human race means rolling stones up hill.

Just at the present time we are in the midst of a condition of tremendous enthusiasm brought about by the prospective war. People are tumbling over each other to take part and are dropping those humbler pursuits which seem to promise less result. The war has been a godsend to those who have become weary in well doing in other directions. But what you will find is this, that those who were bored with other forms of service will soon become bored here. Just as soon as there is a call for steady and persistent work, apart from whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, then there will be a dropping off. But those quiet, poised people who have

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been going on for years, allowing themselves time for diversion and rest, curbing their exuberant feelings, these will be the ones who will hold on; they will be the ones who will not drop what they were doing before the war, they will just find time for a little more. I have received letters from several to the effect that they are now so busy with Red Cross work that they have no more time for prisoners, which means, that in their new ardor to heal the wounds yet to be they forget those ever present wounds on the body of society which count just as much against efficiency as a defective relief system; they drop their plows and run with the crowd.

It is not specially creditable to those who undertake a work with enthusiasm to get tired and drop it for something else which seems to be more interesting. Without doubt it happens that one may now and then come to the point of seeing that there is nothing in what appeared to offer much. There are times when one wisely beats a retreat. But this is a wholly different matter from boredom. That a task which is incipiently interesting should cease to be so is obviously not the fault of the task, but of the individual. To be gluttonous and undisciplined speaks nothing against food; it indicates a tendency to do things just because they are pleasant. To avoid boredom one must not only rest; one must cultivate patience with details, with routine. The desire to drink the cream off the milk is common enough. I know people in plenty who think themselves fit for big things, but who will not undertake the necessary drudgery, and some of them have frankly told me so. In my own work I have found that while there are many who are willing to do the easy and attractive jobs, there are fewer who show persistence, and these latter are not the very enthusiastic ones, but the plain people who are used to the humdrum of domestic or business life. You would be surprised at the relative number of those who want to make the acquaintance of educated and intelligent prisoners. They demand people as nearly like those with whom they are accustomed to associate as possible, at least superficially.

After these somewhat rambling remarks, I will simply add that those who find themselves getting bored with any good work they are doing should look on it as a defect of their nature against which they should resolutely set themselves. When they go to church on Sunday let them occupy the time when the minister is talking of the eternal joy and rest of heaven in thinking of the infinite patience of the Almighty in presiding over a world of fools, and realizing that it is in this quality, not in the opportunity of being forever enthusiastic over doing nothing, that being fit for the kingdom of God consists. Let them remember that the world would come to chaos in short order if the powers above were as prone to ennui as they are. We know the interpretation of the parable of the Sower. "When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Far oftener it is just plain boredom.

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Mr. Employer Of Men! Stop! Look! Listen!

Barnum was wrong!

The people don't like to be humbugged!

They want what they pay for—and they pay for what they want.

A business man picks his employees because they are able to deliver the goods. If they fall down with the basket, he uses the ax.

We learn by experience. The man in prison having spilled the beans, pays the price and takes a tighter grip on the basket.

His faith in himself is unshaken. He knows that little slips mean costly falls. He has the goods to deliver, but the market is lacking.

Tarnished goods, eh?

Not necessarily! The prison graduate may be just as capable, just as efficient, just as valuable an asset to your business as the fellow who never saw the inside of an iron barred cell.

But to prove it an opportunity must be offered him. In the past he has been denied that opportunity.

The HUMANITARIANS have close to one thousand prison inmates, representing every walk and condition of life, on their membership list.

We can find you the right man for the right job. We will send him to you, and we only ask that he be given exactly the same chance that you'd give his luckier brother.

You pay for efficient service. If the man we send you is unwilling or unable to deliver the goods, fire him and drop us a line so that we may find other employment for him.

But we want your assistance, Mr. Employer of Labor, in our work in getting the men started. You can give him a chance in your factory, work-shop or office. Will you?

If you are willing to take a chance, if you are willing to reach down and help us pull some deserving chap from the muck and mire which threaten to swallow him, just address *E. C. Landis, Treasurer, The Humanitarians, Lansing, Kansas.*

He can supply you with men who can qualify in any line of business, whether it be building motor cars or wrecking buildings.

THE HUMANITARIANS.

Request To Inmates

Those inmates who do not hear from the correspondents assigned to them within a reasonable time after receiving our letter of notification are earnestly requested to inform us, so that other correspondents may be substituted.

It is not possible for us to make our members keep their promises, but we shall be glad to be informed of any shortcomings and to remedy them as promptly as possible. This means you.

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Answers To Correspondents—By Our Goat

Miss R. O. S.—No, don't ask your prisoner what offense he has committed, and don't try to put me up to doing so. We want to be his friends, not his confessors. Consider how you would like to have a stranger ask you what *your* sins are or have been. Would *you* care to confess to theft, forgery or murder? I think not; so consider that you are concerned with his future, not with his past.

Dr. J. P. D.—I have read with interest your letter expressing your opinion that the poverty and ignorance prevailing in India are the fault of its religious belief, and implying that I am engaged in some sort of propaganda for such religions. While your insinuation is untrue, you have given me the opportunity of asking you whether, in your enlightened opinion, the conditions existing in Europe at present are to be laid at the door of the Christian religion. It never occurred to me before to think so, but if I were to follow your line of argument I should reach the conclusion that all religions are pernicious, with a possible balance in favor of Hinduism, for the Hindus are at least not blowing each others' brains out—they are not adding murder, theft and arson to mere laziness.

A Common Misapprehension About Prisoners' Letters

We constantly receive complaints from correspondents that the letters received from a prisoner have at different times a different handwriting. Almost invariably they suspect that they are being imposed on; that they are being written to by different people.

The explanation is a different one. It is quite a common custom for inmates who are not ready with the pen to get a more educated fellow inmate to write their letters for them. In some institutions there are secretaries specially appointed for this purpose. There is nothing dishonest about this; it is not intentional deception, but the desire to make the letter more presentable.

Not a few inmates have accepted our recent hint that it would be better to write their own letters when possible, and we ask their correspondents to take this as evidence of good faith and to remember that a man is not to be judged by his ability to use a pen. It is not so many years since the ability to read and write was a rarity even among the better classes of the community. A man's a man for a' that.

Newspaper Clippings Wanted

The Editor invites members to collect and send in clippings from the papers on all matter relating to prison reform and allied subjects. While it will be impossible to acknowledge these they will be much appreciated. The name and date of the paper from which they are cut will be helpful. Ordinary news reports of crimes and trials are not desired unless they have an important bearing.

Members admitted to the LEAGUE, two weeks ending June 2d: prisoners, 137; outsiders, 48. Registered membership number, June 2d, 7,934.

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Positively Wicked!

Sir:—

I wrote you recently that you need *not* send the CRITIC to me. Some of your articles I consider positively wicked and if I cannot do a kindness to prisoners without being compelled to take that paper, you may cross my name from your list. MRS. A. B. M.

Return Those Letters!

Every correspondent is specially requested in writing to return to us, for our files, all prisoners' letters and application blanks which may have been sent to them for their guidance, and as soon as they can conveniently do so.

The return of the letters is regarded as evidence that the prisoners have been written to, unless the contrary is stated. If the letters are not returned or other acknowledgment made, we have no means of knowing whether this has been done. At the same time it is not possible for us to undertake to make inquiries in such cases.

As it has become obvious that some correspondents are neglecting the duty which they have assumed, thus keeping the prisoners waiting and bringing the LEAGUE into discredit, hereafter, if letters are not returned within one month it will be assumed that they have not adhered to their offer, and other correspondents will be provided.

Notice About Critic Subscriptions

Owing to the greatly increased cost of paper, envelopes and other items incidental to issuing the CRITIC, it will be impossible to be as lenient as heretofore in the matter of sending it to members or others who have not renewed their subscriptions.

Hereafter it will be necessary to drop from our roll those members who do not respond promptly to a notice that their subscription is due, and to assign other correspondents to their prisoners. While we have no right and no desire to interfere with correspondence between our prisoners and those who are not LEAGUE members, we can assume no responsibility for it and as far as we are concerned it cannot be recognized.

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

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THE O. E. LIBRARY CRITIC

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BY

The O. E. Library League

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

THE JOLIET MUTINY.

This is in no sense a defense of the unfortunate affair which occurred recently in Joliet Prison, in which a large number of inmates took part and during which several buildings were burned. That such things cannot be permitted and must lead to serious after-results for the participants goes without saying. But there are certain things to be remembered in connection with such outbreaks.

One must remember that a mutiny is not a mutiny just because the participants are convicts. A mutiny is a strike, a demonstration of human nature which may occur anywhere where there is general dissatisfaction. There is no essential difference between a mutiny in a prison, in an army, on a ship, or in the ranks of civil society. We have labor riots, food riots, draft riots, political riots, race riots and what not, occurring without the walls of prisons. That men in prison may occasionally adopt the same tactics is proof, not that they are especially depraved or dangerous, not that they differ from other human beings, but that they are the same.

While a mutiny is a revolt against authority, one must never forget that there are two entirely distinct questions involved. Is a forcible protest justifiable? and, is there a reasonable ground for dissatisfaction and protest? These are quite different. To suppress the demonstration by sheer force and to let it go at that, to neglect to remedy the causes, that is the method of militarism and of tyranny. To suppress, but then to investigate the causes of discontent and to take steps for their alleviation, that is the method of the wise man who knows that suppression never suppresses in the long run, that the evil forces pent up in one direction will make themselves perceived in another and that he whose natural impulses are too rigidly restrained will become resentful and an enemy of order. This has been the crying evil of our penal system in the past.

Mutinies are prima facie evidence of dissatisfaction and afford a strong presumption of mismanagement. They are often ascribed to lax discipline, but no lack of discipline in itself will produce a mutiny. No man rebels because he is not treated with harshness or because he is allowed to do pretty much as he chooses. He rebels because

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he is, or thinks he is, treated badly by those in power. Whether he is or is not is a matter for investigation. That he has rebelled is no excuse for continuing an evil system. Rigid discipline applied in the wrong way, without reason or discrimination, or arbitrarily, is more likely to cause dissatisfaction than laxity. Nobody can deny for a moment that rigid discipline must prevail in a prison and be enforced without fear or favor, just as it is in the army. But there is rational discipline and irrational discipline. Rational discipline is enforced in such a way that each man can accommodate himself to it without needless suffering. To hold a man under rational discipline does not mean to cow him, to break his spirit, to deprive him of harmless friendships and other normal interests of life, or to inflict discomfort just because it is discomfort. It means to insist strictly on all which tends to efficiency, whether of mind or body, and to keep the ideal of efficiency always at the front.

While disorder on the part of a few persons of incorrigible or unbalanced nature is likely to occur in any penal institution, well managed prisons do not have riots of any considerable magnitude. The men know that they have to stay there and the large majority know when they are humanely even if strictly treated and do not risk making matters worse by a general outbreak. It is only when the men regard themselves as unfairly treated that a general mutiny occurs. Several years ago there was an extensive outbreak in Sing Sing, caused by poor food and bad treatment—note the word "bad", not strict. Last year the inmates of the Missouri Penitentiary rose in revolt and burned some of the buildings, a riot also caused by bad management.

The Joliet riot will doubtless be made the subject of official investigation and this, if impartially conducted and not with the view of whitewashing the authorities will show how far it was due to lax discipline and how far to severity or harsh and unreasonable treatment without regard to the experience of modern institutions which do not have such difficulties. The grievances of the men will be listened to and remedied within reason, quite apart from their foolish way of expressing them. Due attention will be given to the question why, in an institution where harmony and order have pervailed for so long a change of administration should be followed so quickly by such disastrous results. The men have not changed in this brief time, the management has. Therefore. one may well suspect that it is the new factor which has caused the trouble.

The general tenor of the newspaper reports seems to indicate that the men were worried because they feared that their honor privileges would be curtailed, if, in fact this had not already been done, and because they were aggrieved over the withdrawal of the privilege of receiving visits which they had enjoyed. and the limiting of such visits to "relatives." It is the custom in almost all prisons

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to allow the inmates to be visited by respectable persons who have a reasonably good excuse for so doing, and at specified times and under proper restrictions, irrespective of relationship. To limit visits to "relatives" is a discrimination against the majority of inmates who have no kin within visiting distance, or none who would want to see them. That such a sweeping rule should have been made without reference to the custom and experience of other institutions similarly situated with respect to large cities is most astonishing.

Another reason seems to be the resentment of the acting Warden at the large amount of correspondence coming to the prisoners, some of which was without doubt objectionable, and to the fear of the inmates that their mail privileges would be curtailed. Now nobody can deny that the class of men in prison is such as to invite at times silly or even immoral correspondence. But no evidence has been given out that this was more than a small fraction of the whole. And then there is the censor, a fixed establishment in all prisons. It is his business to intercept such stuff. For the warden to lose his head and threaten to limit all correspondence, not on the basis of its character, but of relationship, that is quite another matter; it is just a confession of bad management.

The statements given out to the press about women members of the LEAGUE visiting the prison by scores is rubbish, as is also the attempt to fasten the responsibility for a lot of mushy or still more objectionable correspondence upon them. We have only 27 women members in Chicago who have been placed in touch with Joliet inmates. It is unlikely that more than three or four of these have either the time or the inclination to visit the prison, and that any number of other members should do so, unless en route to Chicago, is preposterous. These things are simply a proof that the acting Warden is trying to find some one on whom to place the blame for his own lack of tact. We have directly requested the authorities at Joliet to give us such information as would enable us to decide positively whether any of the objectionable letters proceeded from LEAGUE members or not, and we have published the request in the papers. No attention has been given to our request. Why? Because the proof cannot be given. So far as we have been able to trace the published objectionable letters or excerpts, as where the place of residence of the writer or the name of the prisoner has been given, and there are several such, they are from people of whom we know nothing. The Warden does not possess a list of our members. The letters written by them are written on just everyday paper such as others use, not on our letterheads, and therefore do not bear the thumbmarks of the LEAGUE. Further, prisoners have other acquaintances. The population of Chicago is about forty per cent of that of Illinois, which means that a large part of the prisoners come from that city, and

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Joliet is only twenty-five miles from the heart of Chicago. They are able to get the addresses of women from the papers or from their friends, and there are fools enough in the world in petticoats to write to a prisoner just as a matter of adventure or intrigue.

To pick out a few improper letters from thousands of innocent ones, to assert without proof that these are O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE letters and to publish them as such in the papers in conjunction with two or three harmless or form letters which confessedly come from us, in order to create the impression that they all do, that is the method of the man who passes a bundle of counterfeits with a genuine note at the top and bottom. None of our members who read this stuff and who possess any power of reasoning or of seeing through a bunco game will be taken in for a moment, while those who are so taken in can readily be spared—they do not possess the acumen needed in this kind of work.

One word more. We guard our membership carefully. But the best laid plans will no more prevent an occasional fool from breaking into an association than they will prevent a prisoner from breaking out of prison now and then—and we think we have heard of such things happening, even in Joliet. This talk of the Warden about letters from girls 15 and 16 is nonsense so far as we are concerned. We have been besieged by Sunday school and other teachers for the names of prisoners to whom their pupils might write and their letters have gone where they belonged—into the waste-basket. If any such young people have been admitted it has been through misrepresentation; if any old ladies have spilled over it has been a flagrant violation of parole. When any penal institution can present a record of no escapes, no broken paroles, then we shall be willing to confess ourselves a failure, but not till then.

If, however, any of our members have really been foolish enough to have used indiscreet language, or to have indulged in the coddling which is so often ridiculed, they will now have the opportunity of seeing what such things lead to. Their resignations will be gladly accepted. They are invited to step up to the desk and report.

Under Subscribed

That the Liberty Loan has been largely oversubscribed is a reason for great rejoicing. No indication has been seen, however. that the needs of the LEAGUE have been oversubscribed, and in the competition, the Loan has come out the winner. Perhaps some of those members who have been disappointed in not securing all the bonds they wished can now send a small portion of the cash this way. We need it badly and are really getting "on our uppers."

See the coupon on another page.

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A Public Letter

Editor of The Chicago Herald,
Sir:—

In your issue of June 7th, page 3, under the title, "Soul Romances the Cause of Riots," you print several letters and excerpts from letters which purport to come from members of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE and to be addressed to inmates of Joliet Prison, and which are put together ingeniously so as to make it appear that the LEAGUE is responsible for them. Two of these letters, which contain my own name, are harmless enough, and apparently are simply used to create the impression that the others have been written by members of the LEAGUE.

No evidence whatever of this appears in the article. The address of one of the writers is given as Corning, New York. The truth is, we know nothing of the writer and have not and never have had a member in that town.

The attempt to fasten the responsibility on our members for a lot of foolish and as the Warden says, prurient, letters written by silly, coarse or irresponsible people by mere assertion and by publishing them in conjunction with our name or harmless bona fide LEAGUE letters, is not only one which would not hold in court for an instant, but is also, as you doubtless know, a clear case of defamation and subject to the usual legal action. I am not questioning your motives—you publish what is turned in to you. But in justice to our members I must state that you are going too far when you do this without taking the trouble to ascertain whether the objectionable correspondence originated with us, or in the slums of Chicago and other cities with people of whom we know nothing.

Further, the Warden does not possess a list of our members. There is nothing in the letters written by them to distinguish them from others. The men in Joliet have their friends and have various way of getting into touch with strangers. If his charges have no better foundation than the two letters, where the address of the writer is given, they have no foundation at all.

Further, the insinuation that we are engaged in a propaganda for a Hindu or any other philosophy is wholly false. We represent no cult or creed whatever, and if someone has expressed a belief in such matters, it is their personal affair with which we have nothing whatever to do.

Knowing the fairness of your paper, I expect that you will give publicity to my statement, and that you will not publish such defamatory matter in future without first giving us the opportunity to verify the assertion that we are responsible for it.

Yours very truly,
H. N. STOKES, *Editor of The Critic.*

Note—We understand that the above letter was published by the *Herald.*

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The following is a quotation from the April 1917 issue of the *Joliet Prison Post,* a magazine "Published by the Board of Commissioners and the Warden of the Illlinois State Penitentiary at Joliet, Ill.," and was written after nearly one year of the activity of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE in that prison. It refers to the LEAGUE, but needless to say the Warden, whose name appears on the title page, is Michael Zimmer, not A. L. Bowen.

"A MOVEMENT IN BEHALF OF PRISONERS

"An organization, which it is sought to make nation-wide, has been formed within the past year or so for the purpose of securing friendly correspondents for the inmates of prisons. The idea is not the mere entertainment of prisoners, but that of encouraging them to look forward hopefully to honest lives on their release of helping them wisely to plan for their future, and of giving them assurance of sympathy in their efforts for betterment. It is a form of practical social service, not a mere demonstration of useless or foolish sentiment.

"The most of these prisoners are in for a limited time; many of them are weak, rather than naturally criminal; many of them have had little chance in life. When they come out, their way will be more difficult than before if they are without friends or guidance, and they will be in danger of drifting back into crime again. Correspondence of this kind should be conducted only by persons of mature judgment and discretion. It should not be given over to preaching, but to friendly discourse on many things, and has possibilties of great good."

Jollyettes

Between the efforts of the acting Warden of the prison at Joliet and the *Chicago Tribune*, it is an open question whether Chicago can retain its nickname of "The Windy City" or not.

Acting Warden Bowen, in his attempt to fix the responsibility for the riot in Joliet Prison on some one other than himself, has sought for a "goat" in the numerous visitors to that institution. Wrong again, Warden. Have you never read of the account of the Last Judgment, as told by a Big Man almost two thousand years ago, in which those who *did not* visit the prisoners were put down among the goats?

The *Chicago Tribune* says that the assertion of one of our members that she had first been led to read the Bible by a prisoner is "maudlin." One wonders what would have happened if he had induced her to read the *Tribune.*

Some of the intercepted letters written by ladies to inmates of Joliet Prison seem to have "waked to esctasy the living liar."

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We have now heard that letters not delivered to prisoners, but confiscated by the censor, have caused demoralization of inmates of Joliet. And yet the Warden sneers at the occult!

Letter From A Prisoner

Dear Dr. Stokes:—

I am enclosing herewith an article clipped from the *News* of June 6th and I wish to say regarding same it is an atrocious slander upon the noble women who are interested in prison reform and your efforts to bring sunshine and cheer into the lives of the unfortunates behind the grim gray walls and iron bars of our penal institutions and if some narrow-minded, incompetent head like that of acting Warden Bowen takes it into his mind to stop the good work your organization is doing in his institution, a good chance for many men to get a new start in life would be taken from them.

Just answer that nasty lie; nail it as it is, a base slander. It's the poor management of Bowen that caused the riot; not the good women. I know.

Thank God we in the state of Maryland have big, broad-minded men at the head of our penal institutions, none better anywhere. We never have any riots and our under keepers seem to be just as broad-minded as a whole.

Just answer that nasty article, or get Miss ——— to answer it. I cannot, but you can publish this letter.

Yours gratefully,

Some Cheap Books

(Subject to change without notice)

Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used

for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK.....

for .....

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BY

The O. E. Library League

Vol. VI **Wednesday, July 11, 1917** **No. 24**

ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS **SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS**

THE HONOR OF A CONVICT

Most of our members have read the story proceeding from the office of the Department of Correction, New York City, asserting that a prisoner at the Hart's Island Penitentiary was in correspondence with a fourteen-year-old girl in West Virginia, through the instrumentality of the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE. Commissioner Burdette G. Lewis allowed this statement to be issued to the press without waiting to make an inquiry from us, or otherwise investigating its truth, and it was repeated from day to day with all the embellishments of yellow journalism.

Fortunately, not being an idiot, I keep accurate records of our members and prisoners, and was able to deny in the most emphatic manner that either the prisoner or the young lady had ever been in communication with us.

My denial, addressed to the Commissioner and also published in the papers was met, not by an acknowledgment of the mistake or a proof of the truth of the accusation, but by the publication of another letter, this time a genuine one to a prisoner over my own signature, but which had nothing to do with young girls, bless me, no, but which was calculated to mislead the unthinking into that impression.

It was reserved for the prisoner, described as a man who is serving a fifth term, to come forward himself with a flat denial of the story, completely exonerating the LEAGUE. I give his letter entire, omitting names, as I do not wish to add to the embarrassment of the girl or to advertise the prisoner to the world, although neither he nor she have been accused of writing anything improper in itself. I wish his name might be given, as his action, his fairness and sense of honor might well serve as an example to the officials of the Department of Correction under which he is undergoing penal servitude.

Harts Island, N. Y.
June 28th, 1917

Dr. H. N. Stokes,
Washington, D. C.
Dear Sir:—

To say that I regret the peculiar iniquities of fate which have caused you to endure so great an injustice but faintly expresses my emotions.

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I called at the office of Mr. White this morning and notified him of the errors of his office in saying that it was through you I received the name and address of Frances W———. I informed him of the truth, as to how I received said name and address which was through a post card exchange club and *not through you or your society.*

I was totally ignorant of any knowledge that the Commissioner (Mr. Lewis) had ventured on such a course, until I saw the article in the *Morning World* of the 27th inst. So you see there is nothing you can accuse me of.

With best wishes for your success (as the men here highly appreciate the interest you have taken in them for the writing and receiving letters from parties helps much to relieve them of these somewhat lonely lingering hours),

I am, Dear Sir,
Yours truly,
G. F. L.———.

Commissioner Lewis had heard that the O. E. L. L. was engaged in the nefarious practice of securing friends for the friendless and straightway jumped to the conclusion that it was responsible for every letter written by a woman or a girl to a prisoner, much as did the Warden of Joliet. Notwithstanding the fact that he is at the head of the Department of Correction of the largest city in America and the author of a book on "The Offender," he seems to be unaware of the fact that prison correspondence is something which has existed generally for years, probably before either he or the Editor was born, to say nothing of the fact that the LEAGUE is the only organization which has brought it to a system and safeguarded it.

After all, one must not be too severe with Commissioner Lewis; he only believed "what somebody said." Like a number of our members who read the newspaper story and straightway addressed more or less abusive letters to the Editor of the CRITIC, he simply "went off half-cocked." It is a common manifestation of human nature under provocation. It does not diminish our respect for him, and if you could read, as I have, the nice letter he wrote to the father of the girl who has been exposed to such unpleasant publicity, you would appreciate the man beneath the official. But it should be a warning to these members not to swallow all they read without waiting for its confirmation. To other members it should show that no one can head a movement to help humanity, and especially the so-called "sinners," without the risk of being spit upon by the holy ones, and it should prompt them to more strenuous efforts to support the LEAGUE both morally and financially as well as to secure it publicity of a better kind.

Joliet Again

Up to the present writing nothing has developed to substantiate in any way the assertions of ex-Warden Bowen, accusing the LEAGUE of connection with objectionable correspondence with in-

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mates. One of the statements, which was given the widest publicity and which reflected on the private affairs of one of our members, has proved to be wholly untrue—"a plain lie," if you wish.

One of our friends, a prominent Chicagoan and head of a large prisoner's aid society, writes:

"While at the prison, last week, during Mr. Murphy's absence, I asked the deputy whether they had any actual evidence that any of the improper letters were from your correspondents. He seemed to think that some of them were, but I judge he thought so from the fact that the men who received them were members of your LEAGUE. Of course it is quite possible that some man may have received proper letters from your correspondents and improper ones from other women whom you had not delegated to write to prisoners."

Mr. E. J. Murphy took the wardenship three days after the riot, and there is a new state superintendent of prisons. The question of the continuance of LEAGUE work in Joliet is still pending. Temporarily the rule prohibiting LEAGUE correspondence still holds, subject to reconsideration. I suggest that our members do not forget the boys they have been writing to.

The Convict as a Soldier

The fact that inmates of penal institutions who are within the military age have been required to register seems to have brought a ray of hope to some of these that they may be allowed to serve in the army or navy, and we read of great rejoicing over the fact. In reality, however, it has no such significance, for, as one may remember, the registration law applies to all males between 21 and 31, even though aliens, imbeciles or incurables. The rules still stands that neither the army or navy will accept men who have been convicted of a serious offense and have suffered imprisonment therefor. And this applies equally to those now suffering confinement and to those who have been discharged.

This discrimination against ex-convicts as a class is one which does no credit to those who make it. We may admit, perhaps, that there would be some complications in securing the liberty of men now in confinement with a view of enabling them to bear arms. At the outset one runs against laws regulating the movements of prison inmates; parole laws, laws allowing or limiting the employment of men outside of the prison walls. With the exception of federal prisoners these are state laws and would have to be modified or suspended by legislation, always a slow process and one which would have to be repeated in each state. And there is little inducement, for no matter what the state may do there is the insuperable obstacle of federal military and naval rules.

But the obstacle in the way of employing ex-convicts is not a legal obstacle; it is a blind prejudice, nothing else. It is a prejudice because it lumps together under the word "convict" men of the utmost variety of qualities and without the least distinction. Every

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rule relating to the employment of men, no matter in what capacity, should be based, not on some indefinite term, but on their actual ability to do the work required of them. What is required of a soldier? He must be physically sound; he must have the ability to submit to rigid discipline, the ability to learn, and the moral fortitude to undergo the hardships to which he will be exposed; he must possess loyalty.

Some of these qualifications can be determined by the proper physical and medical examination; others cannot. The man must be given the chance to prove that he has them. We have several military and naval prisons, prisons in which are confined those who violate discipline. What does that prove? Simply that there is no certain way of judging these things in advance.

One needs but read over the list of offenses for which men are imprisoned to see that while some of them are such as indicate that the offender is not to be trusted in a position requiring moral strength, others, on the contrary, are in no way connected with the qualities required of a good soldier. Some of them even demand such traits as a soldier must possess; they are qualities—shall we call them moral?—which are turned in the wrong direction. Courage, alertness, fearlessness, willingness to risk life, these are the attributes of a successful soldier and a successful highwayman alike.

This is not saying that there are not men in prison, or who have done time, who could not be trusted in any position. It is simply saying that the term "criminal" or "convict" covers so much and such a variety, that one cannot use it as a term of condemnation in deciding the fitness of a man for the work of a soldier. We make much ado about a few slackers and talk of forcing them into the army. What is a slacker? In general, he is a coward, a man afraid for his life. We talk of making him fight, willy-nilly, when he is lacking in the first requirement of a soldier. Yet we exclude the convict and ex-convict who is as likely to be a good fighter as any one.

There are indications of the breaking down of the superstition that he who has been under the hand of the law is forever disqualified from any kind of honorable service. One of the most encouraging of these is the increasing willingness on the part of the employer of labor to give work to ex-convicts. Another is the fact that England and Canada, and perhaps other lands, are now willing to employ as soldiers all but the worst class of convicts. This has doubtless come about through the pressing need for man power. We have not reached that point and may not, but it is quite time we were coming to recognize that it is the fitness of the individual for the work, not his being a member of a class which is under condemnation, which must decide the question.

The prison press, as well as numerous letters received from

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inmates, indicates a very general desire on their part to enlist for service. While one must not forget that the man in captivity is likely to be willing to accept the hardships and hazards of war as a condition of liberty, there can be no question that patriotism is not limited to the man without the prison walls. To be in prison does not preclude loving one's country. The prisoner is a man with like passions with us and the assumption that he is not is the cause of the most flagrant abuses. Just dismiss the notion that the prisoner would not fight as gladly as you or I; there is nothing in it.

All prisoners who are eligible for parole should be eligible for military service. In fact many more should be. The great risk of liberating a prisoner on parole lies in his being thrown out into the world with no means, no guidance and no employment, exposed to the temptations and obstacles of everyday life. This does not apply to the military career. Transfer the prisoner from the prison to the army or navy and you are transferring him from one system of discipline, often a bad one, directly into the rigid discipline of the navy or army, which is based, not on the conception of punishment but of efficiency. His support is assured, he does not face starvation or more than a few temptations; he has every incentive to make good. There can be no doubt that parole into the army would be successful in many more cases than parole into civil life.

Meanwhile, nothing could be better for the disciplining of prison inmates than the introduction of systematic military training into every prison. Military training is rational discipline; it looks towards building up the men physically and inculcating prompt obedience to orders, it gives every man self-mastery. Have you noticed of late times how the pale youths who have entered the army have quickly developed into husky fellows, how they show a marked increase of manhood? And have you ever noticed the contrary effects of prison life, especially when prolonged? Have you read the tuberculosis statistics of prisons?

It is estimated that the standing prison population of this country is about 150,000. No one could tell offhand how many of these could be taken into the army, but one must remember that these 150,000 consist chiefly of males and very largely of males within the military age limits. Further it is said that nearly 500,000 persons pass through the penal institutions each year. As to the number of males of military age who have done time, but are now at liberty no figures are at hand, but the number must be a large one. Taken as a whole it would make a very respectable sized army for peace times and would be a valuable addition in time of war. It may be needed. Now is the time to get ready. To remove this stigma from the ex-convict, to give every man who has done time an opportunity, in so far as his offence is not one which by its nature would make him a poor soldier, to grant a liberal extension of parole laws conditioned on military service, and to introduce

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a system of military training into all prisons, these would go far towards solving the problem of making our derelicts over into valuable men.

In conclusion let me quote from *Stray Shots,* the organ of the military prison at Fort Leavenworth, an opinion written, not by an inmate but by the prison chaplain. It holds with some, though perhaps with less force for all penal institutions. And this opinion refers to men who, though physically selected for army service have been guilty of breaking military regulations. They are men weeded out, you might say, for their inability to toe the mark in the army. If it is true of such, how much more likely is it of the vast majority of civil convicts and ex-convicts who have not been put to the test of failure.

"Seldom has more joyous news come to a great group of men than when orders were received this week that every inmate of the Disciplinary Barracks would on June 5th be registered for War duty. Should they be called to the colors, there are men enough here for one war strength regiment, with band, field music and non-coms, and there are experienced commissioned officers on duty here who would stake their reputations that these men would make tremendous hikers and courageous fighters. With a moderate amount of elimination the Disciplinary Barracks regiment would give such an account of itself as would demonstrate to fair minded men that the average military offender needs only a second chance. There are few slackers here. Past mistakes will not excuse any able bodied, normal minded man from military duty. Let the draw from the wheel depopulate the Barracks and the spot in France to which these men go will become historic. There are plenty of ofcers who would glory in an opportunity to lead this unit."

The League to be Investigated

A resolution was introduced into the House of Representatives May 28th, by Representative William A. Rodenberg, of Illinois, comment on which, in the form of a letter to Mr. Rodenberg, will be found below. The resolution provides:

"That the Attorney General of the United States be, and he is hereby authorized and directed to investigate and to report to the House of Representatives regarding the organization and operations of the Oriental Esoteric Library League of Washington, District of Columbia, and all similar organizations having for their purpose the establishment of correspondence between young girls and the inmates of penal and reformatory institutions throughout the United States; and

"That the Attorney General be requested to recommend to the House of Representatives such legislation as, in his judgment, will prevent a continuation of this pernicious, maudlin and demoralizing practice."

The LEAGUE *has been working* under supervision of the U. S. Department of Justice for the past three years. See next CRITIC.

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An Open Letter to Representative Rodenberg

June 28, 1917.

Hon. William A. Rodenberg,
House of Representatives
Dear Sir:—

I have just read a notice in this evening's paper relative to your resolution for an investigation of organizations having to do with prison correspondence. As far as the O. E. Library League is concerned we would welcome such an investigation, and the more complete the better. It would serve to knock the bottom out of some of the statements which have been made about our aims and methods, as well as results.

I enclose for your information two statements which I gave out to the press shortly after the affair at Joliet.

The wording of your resolution, as printed in the *Evening Star* is admirable, with two exceptions. First, the name of our association is not Oriental Esoteric Library League, and it has nothing to do with the oriental or esoteric. Second, we have not and never had the purpose of establishing correspondence between young girls and inmates of penal institutions, nor have we ever done this.

You know doubtless, as I do, that there are plenty of immature and silly women in the world who would write to prisoners. We use every possible precaution to exclude these, and, I think, with entire success. I often get letters from Sunday school and other teachers, asking for lists of prisoners to whom their pupils may write. Such requests meet with no response from us, but I imagine that some of the correspondence alluded to may have originated in their getting the names elsewhere.

To take your time for one moment more, let me quote from a letter just received from the Secretary of the Parole Board and mail inspector of the Arizona State Prison at Florence, Arizona—Hon. J. J. Sanders:

"My experience in the Arizona State Prison for the past five and one-half years is that the O. E. Library League furnishes prison inmates with correspondents holding to high aims and high ideals—men and women holding positions of trust and honor in finance, commerce, industry, education and theology."

That is our sole aim, and anything else is just misrepresentation.

Besides repeating the wish that the Department of Justice will investigate us, let me say that I shall be pleased to give you any further information personally, and, should you wish, to have you personally investigate our records and inspect our files.

Very truly yours, H. N. Stokes.

The Warden of Wyoming State Penitentiary urges all inmates to join the O. E. Library League. See next Critic.

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BY

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS **SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS**

THE MOUNTAIN AND THE MOUSE

The Mountain was in labor and brought forth—a Mouse.
—Aesop's Fables

A little country girl in West Virginia thought she would like to collect picture post cards, so she sent her name and address to the family story paper to be published in a list of those who desired to make such exchanges. It was duly printed and in course of time a copy of the paper fell into the hands of a prisoner doing time in one of the prisons of New York City. He too thought he would like to collect post cards, but being a prisoner and having no means of getting cards to send in exchange, he wrote a letter to the girl and in due time received a reply. And so several letters were exchanged.

The superintendent of the prison got possession of one of the girl's letters, a very innocent letter, telling of her life on the farm, "What!" said he. "Here is some of the work of that man down in Washington." So he reported as much to the Big Man in New York City who runs the city's prison department, telling him at the same time that the said prisoner was corresponding with women in different parts of the country, whose names he had also obtained from the man in Washington. The prisoner, to be sure, knew nothing of this. He was not interrogated—probably New York prisoners are not thought sufficiently trustworthy to interrogate. The Big Man in New York wrote a courteous if somewhat sharp letter to the man in Washington, asking him if it was true that he had given the girl's name to the prisoner, and advising him that if true it was quite time to stop such nonsense.

Within one hour of the receipt of this letter the man in Washington had thoroughly investigated his records, had found that he had never heard of either the girl or the prisoner, had written an emphatic denial of the story as well as of the charge that he ever did such things, and had mailed it to the Big Man, Mr. Commissioner Lewis.

But the Big Man in New York could not sit at rest in his chair and wait for the next mail—the temptation to get his name

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into the papers was entirely too great. So he sent for a reporter, or, to judge from the results, a dozen of them, and told them that the man in Washington had positively been guilty of the offense and that he was doing the same thing with girls all over the country. He even gave them the name and address of the girl. Then the editors took down their dictionaries of billingsgate and set their lie factories—an essential annex to every New York paper—to work, the city editors got busy preparing copy, telegraphers sent the news all over the country that a human ghoul in Washington, a corrupter of youth, was maintaining a bureau for securing young girls to write to prisoners. Had he been a white slaver he could hardly have been more abused, in fact more than one paper directly compared him to such. Then it was reported that the Washington organization was the parent of several other organizations having the object of procuring the names of young girls for convicts.

Then a member of Congress read of it and introduced a resolution into the House of Representatives, calling on the Attorney General of the United States to investigate the Washington organization and "all similar organizations having for their purpose the establishment of correspondence between young girls and the inmates of penal and reformatory institutions," and requesting him to recommend legislation which "will prevent a continuance of this pernicious, maudlin and demoralizing practice." True, he did not take the trouble to get the name of the LEAGUE correctly, or to inquire whether it had such purposes or did such things, or whether there were really other associations doing what he said, nor did he trouble himself to learn that the LEAGUE had actually been working for three years under the supervision of the Department of Justice. He simply swallowed the newspaper stories whole.

And then—the prisoner, who had not been aware of this hullabaloo, who had not even been asked a question, chanced to read of the uproar in a paper and explained to the office that he did *not* get the young lady's name from the LEAGUE, but from a post card exchange list. He sent this information to the man in Washington and succeeded in getting it published in *one* New York paper. The girl's mother wrote to the LEAGUE and confirmed the prisoner's statement in every particular.

The mountain had given birth to a mouse!

And all of this came from the desire of a young girl for some picture post cards! The girl has been advertised from one end of the United States to the other and is probably getting letters from prisoners by each mail; the prisoner was held up to scorn, although he acted far more honorably than the Commissioner; a quiet citizen of Washington who seldom thinks of anything but serving his fellow man, was made out to be a monster and threatened with a Government investigation, while two public men and endless newspaper editors made themselves ridiculous; thousands of dollars were

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wasted in paper, telegrams and reporters' service and the time of Congress taken up from important matters—all because of a few post cards and the haste of Commissioner Lewis to get his name into print and demonstrate his efficiency as an official.

Apart from my personal interest in the matter, which you can imagine is not of the least, I think the story an exceedingly instructive one. There are several morals to be drawn from it.

One of these relates to the New York Commissioner of Correction. It is too obvious to state. It raises the question whether a man who uses his official position to start slanderous reports about private citizens without taking the trouble to find if they are true, and who is too little to admit his mistake in the same public fashion, is big enough to handle the difficult problem of correcting other sinners.

Another moral is that one should not be too ready to believe what he reads in the newspapers or what "somebody says," before allowing time for investigation. To condemn without trial is nothing but lynch law, and you might hang the wrong man, to say nothing of stultifying yourself. To repeat a story which is unproved is to be a participant in the lynching. It is almost as difficult to unslander a man as to un-hang him. Stories, like snowballs, grow in size as they roll along. It is a mistake to imagine that you can escape the responsibility for a malicious story on the plea that some one told it to you. You are responsible not only for the story, but you are responsible for all that results from it, the exaggerations, the additions and the perversions.

Another moral is, that he who heads any movement for the betterment of mankind is likely to have everything dumped on his shoulders. The cry "Crucify him" is an old one, but it is repeated over and over in many forms, thanks to the activities of the Old Maids' Court. There are plenty of small people who see the fly-specks on everything and who have their microscopes out looking for them, while they fail to see the total result. Probably there is not a single feature of our social system which does not have its defects. Railroads kill some people—therefore, away with the railroads; patients sometimes die as the result of operations—therefore, do away with surgeons; now and then somebody writes a foolish letter to a prisoner, or a prisoner is guilty of indiscretion—therefore, prohibit everybody from writing to prisoners and stop prisoners from receiving mail. All of these things belong in the same category. The big minded men know that notwithstanding even Providence, the world does not always run smoothly. It is the little men, the searchers for fly-specks, who waste time that might have been employed in bigger things, and who end in making themselves ridiculous and in being themselves the dupes of gossips and talebearers.

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A Conclusive Letter—And A Moral

In the last CRITIC I published the letter of the prisoner proving the falsity of Commissioner Burdette G. Lewis's charges. Another letter, which places his statements where they belong, is the following from the mother of the young girl to whom he has given such unpleasant notoriety. These letters dispose of the matter completely and beyond question.

New Cumberland, W. Va., 6-29-17.

Mr. H. N. Stokes
Kind Sir:—

Your letter at hand. Now Frances had her name in the card exchange of the Family Story Paper and I can't understand how this George L——— got her address unless he got the paper some way and he sent her one postal and then wrote her a letter asking if she wouldn't write to him as he had been hurt in a foot-ball game and was still in the hospital and ask her to write to him to help pass his lonely hours. Now Frances is only 14 years old and don't send or receive any cards or letters but what I see and I am sure there will be no more to go to G. F. L.——— or any more male correspondents. Hoping this is satisfactory in every way. Now we still have the letters that came to Frances. If you care to see them we will send them; if not we will burn them.

I beg to remain,

Respectfully yours,
Mrs. Wm. C. W.———

The incident which is thus disposed of proves two things. The first is, that the LEAGUE did *not* give the name of the young girl to the prisoner. The second is, that Commissioner Lewis, in his effort to make himself conspicuous and to pose as a defender of young girls, has himself done the very thing he reprobates. He has published the full name and address of this girl all over the land as one who is willing to correspond with prisoners, and so has given it to every prisoner in America who chances to get a copy of one of these newspapers.

To reply to Commissioner Lewis in his own words: "Let me assure you that the sooner you stop such nonsense the better it will be for the young women of America and the prisoners undergoing sentence in institutions."

The League Has Great Need of More Correspondents and More Cash

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Facts That Speak For Themselves

In view of the fact that the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE has been attacked in the press and even in Congress, partly on the basis of things for which it is in no way responsible, partly on the ground of purely theoretical objections by people who have no practical or first-hand knowledge of the matter, it is well to consider how it is regarded by prison officials, and why, if it is the vicious and destruc-

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tive movement it is said to be, it should be encouraged by those officials who are on the inside and who are certainly best fitted to judge.

Remember, please, that no letter enters or leaves a prison without being read by the official mail inspector, whose duty it is to intercept objectionable correspondence. The fact that a letter leaves a prison, or is received by an inmate, is evidence that it is "officially approved." That prisoners are allowed to send such censored requests to the LEAGUE for correspondents, that is *prima facie* evidence that the authorities desire, or at least do not object to such correspondence being carried on. That they allow it to continue year after year, after it has once begun, is evidence that they find the results beneficial, or at least unobjectionable.

Nobody could be more jealous than the prison officials that scandals and improper conduct on the part of the inmates shall be avoided. Their own standing and position depend on it. If they err at all, it is on the side of strictness rather than of leniency. They are glad to have some one take the trouble to provide responsible correspondents for the inmates and thus relieve them, in large measure, of the temptation to pick them up haphazard anywhere. The officials, who are in direct touch with the men, and I include not only the warden, but the mail inspector and the chaplain, who, in the smaller prisons, is very generally the censor, know that a properly supervised correspondence helps the men, cheers, encourages and inspires them and makes them more amenable to discipline. These are the men who do not raise objections. It is always the man on the outside who knows least, who is not in a position to see, and who judges only from the occasional exceptions, or from baseless rumor, who makes the most noise. Those who know are silent; they give their encouragement, although they would be the very first to express their objections did they find it detrimental.

This has been the sentiment with which our work has generally been received. Even in those cases where it was suspiciously regarded at first, it has overcome this suspicion when time has been allowed for observing its results.

Read this letter from the Wyoming State Penitentiary. Warden Alston was at first inclined to look on us with distrust, but has become convinced that the LEAGUE is doing the very work which is needed by the prisoners.

Wyoming Pen,
Harold Gorman, Editor in Chief,
Box 407, Rawlins, Wyoming, June 28, 1917

My dear Mr. Stokes:—

As you remember that some time ago I informed you about our correspondence mailing office being settled. And now I wish to inform you again that I have had an interview with our Warden a few days ago, and the result of my interview with him was that he has granted the inmates of this institution an unlimited mail privilege. The Warden does not stop at this, but he

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further urges that every man who is capable of writing in this institution should have a correspondent from the O. E. L. L. both to educate him and to brighten his hours of confinement. I hope that you will give us a little write-up in the CRITIC regarding this, so that our correspondents will not blame us for the long delays in answering their letters in the past. Will have men of this institution to send application for membership within a few days.

Very respectfully,
HAROLD GORMAN

Read this letter from the Secretary of the Board of Paroles and Pardons for the State of Arizona, who is at the same time mail inspector for the prison:

Florence, Arizona, June 23, 1917

My dear Mr. Stokes:—

I thank you for the privilege of reading copies of letters you wrote to the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Herald anent the Joliet rumpus. Your letters should set your LEAGUE right with the people in showing that it was not the O. E. LEAGUE members who were the undesirable correspondents.

It would seem to me that all this hullabaloo from Joliet prison was uncalled for. All mail in and out of penal institutions is inspected by a prison official. It is a very easy matter for the inspector of the mail to censor or eliminate anything of an undesirable nature. The whole affair is like a tempest in a teapot over a matter under absolute control of the state.

My experience in the Arizona State Prison for the past five and one-half years is that the O. E. LEAGUE furnishes prison inmates with correspondents holding to high aims and high ideals—men and women holding positions of trust and honor in finance, commerce, industry, education and theology.

Very truly yours,
J. J. SANDERS, *Parole Clerk.*

And this, from the chaplain of the Washington State Penitentiary, where prisoners are allowed to write but one letter a month:

My dear Dr. Stokes:—

We do not like to let any one inmate have more than one corresponding league member. If this member is not satisfactory to T——— he may have the privilege of changing same if you see fit to do so. Trusting you will understand that it is my wish to help your work in any way that is proper and possible, I am

Sincerely yours,
T. J. CANNON, *Chaplain*

In connection with the proposed government investigation of the LEAGUE your attention is called to the fact that the LEAGUE has been undergoing daily investigation by the Department of Justice for the past three years. We have a very large correspondence with the two Federal penitentiaries at Leavenworth and Atlanta, which are under the Department of Justice. During these three years not a letter has ever been written either from this office or by a LEAGUE member to an inmate of one of these prisons, or by an inmate to me or to a member, without being read by an Inspector of the Department of Justice permanently located on the spot for this purpose and trained to catch up anything objectionable.

During all of this time not a single complaint has ever reached

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us. On the contrary we often receive helpful suggestions from that source as to the kind of correspondent a prisoner needs. I understand that the wardens and inspectors give a similar aid on occasion to our correspondents.

As this covers the correspondence of more than one thousand inmates, it is excedingly unlikely that the Department would find us doing anything improper elsewhere.

Write To Your Congressman

Some of our members have proposed writing to representatives and senators in Congress with regard to the proposed investigation of the LEAGUE by the Government, and have asked my permission to do so.

Certainly, by all means do it. Men who are called on to vote on a resolution in Congress should be informed in advance as to the facts, instead of being fed on unproved and disproved slanders. While the LEAGUE, and I myself personally, invite and desire the fullest investigation, provided it includes a probe into the methods of the ex-warden of Joliet and the New York Commissioner of Correction, I am too busy to agitate the matter or to write letters in my own defense. But those who know what the LEAGUE is and is doing should stand up for it.

It has been proposed that such an investigation should include an inquiry into the legality of the action of prison officials in interfering with prisoners' mail which does not violate the postal regulations.

From An "Ex-Con" Who Is Making Good

July 9, 1917.

Dr. H. N. Stokes
Dear Sir:—

Lately I have noticed as I read the papers that you and your organization are being censured with respect to the work the LEAGUE is carrying on, so I will tell you very briefly what the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE really does for the men behind prison bars.

While doing a "bit" recently I became a member and became acquainted through this agency with some noble-hearted women and public-spirited men who were willing to help me towards becoming a law-abiding, self-respecting citizen.

This LEAGUE does help men as no other organization can or will, and its members do assist and encourage men to find themselves.

There is no foundation to the newspaper articles I read that you are trying to spread Theosophy or some other ism or schism. In every prison may be found "nuts" who stand in with the administration, who call themselves uplifters, reformers, sociological bugs, and churches which try to get the men to enter the pearly gates through them, but this LEAGUE you represent beats them all, because it possesses enough acumen to realize that a man in prison needs the right kind of friends if he is to become a law-abiding citizen, and the O. E. LIBRARY LEAGUE does get men friends who "stick closer than a brother."

Yours for success,

J. M. M.———

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Music Records Wanted. Persons having grafonola and similar records which they no longer need will do a kindness by sending them to *The Speigner Improvement Club, State Prison, Speigner, Alabama,* or to *Mannie Carter, c/o Warden W. C. McDonald, Conyers, Georgia.* They will be much appreciated by the prisoners.

Some Cheap Books

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Books surplus or withdrawn. Sold only for cash with order, or sent C. O. D. U. S. postage stamps accepted. State substitutes if desired. These prices do not apply to books regularly loaned, but borrowers may ask for "reduced copies if available." Address *O. E. Library League, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.*

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ONE YEAR, 25 CENTS | SIX MONTHS, 15 CENTS

A NEW KIND OF PRISON INDUSTRY

The employment of men in prison is usually regarded as a function of the state. The state furnishes the tools, the machinery, the raw materials, the brains, and, in general, to its shame be it said, pockets the proceeds, giving the worker absolutely nothing but board, lodging and other indispensable necessaries of life. Frequently, too, the state shirks its responsibility by farming the prisoners out to contractors at so much a head, to be used or abused as they like. I have often enough pointed out that this is mere slavery and robbery, that no crime can justify the state in depriving the offender of the right to the product of his labor less the cost of maintenance, that in so doing it deprives him of every incentive to labor, other than the fear of pain; that it inflicts suffering on his dependents if he has such, and ends by casting him out into the world as a pauper, with no means set aside for making a fresh start and with every incentive to commit crime again as a protection from starvation. I have also pointed out that the difficult problem of the competition of prison labor with free labor can never be solved by any makeshift such as the state use system, and that the only solution is the granting of rational compensation, a compensation which will make it impossible to undersell the products of free labor in the open market.

The fact that the prisoner is as much entitled to remuneration for his work as is the free man is gradually coming to be recognized and is being put into effect in some states, which are gradually feeling their way forward to a realization of what is not only abstract justice, but sound economy and fairness to the public as well.

In general, then, prison labor is conducted on the principle of the state conducting industries of one sort or another, at its own risk and without any sort of option on the part of the workers. The prisoners, whether paid or not, have the status of common laborers; they have little or no interest in the results of their labor. Some sort of selection is often made, men being put to work to which they are accustomed or for which they are best fitted, and occasionally, though seldom, some regard is paid to selecting such sorts of labor

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as will teach them a trade which they have some chance of pursuing when free.

There is, however, another order of prison labor which one finds but seldom, and which consists in this, that the prisoners undertake an industry entirely upon their own responsibility and without any aid or interference from the state, assuming all the risks, purchasing the raw materials and disposing of the products. It is true that prisoners are frequently allowed to make knickknacks in their leisure hours and to dispose of them for their own profit. In some prisons such articles are sold to visitors, in others the men are allowed to interest outsiders to purchase them or to dispose of them. Such individual industries are to be found in most prisons, but they labor under the difficulty that they are not co-ordinated, that the men are untrained and have to depend entirely on their own skill and ingenuity and on what is essentially the charity of the public. One can imagine the difficulties under which such work labors, where the convict is hampered by lack of capital, by the impossibility of going abroad to sell his wares and by the utterly irrational and barbarous restrictions placed on mail correspondence in most prisons, thus preventing him from finding customers, to say nothing of the total lack of business knowledge and training, the very lack of which in many cases it is which lands the man in prison. Imagine the difficulty you would have, were you compelled to make and dispose of knickknacks or fancy work, supposing you are free, and consider how it would be if you were confined, with the "privilege" of writing one letter a month, or one letter a week, and consider the humiliation to which the prisoner must subject himself to dispose of his products, often by practically forcing kind hearted people to sell or raffle them off for him to people who do not want them and who buy them simply for charity's sake!

What I have in mind, however, is not this individual labor, but rather the co-operative labor of a considerable number of prisoners in one institution, a sort of manufacturing business, conducted on rational business principles, producing merchandise and disposing of it as any other group of men might do, and with the sole difference that they sleep in the prison instead of working in a factory and going home at night. Such a system might be conducted in one of two ways; either an energetic prisoner assumes the risks and hires his fellow convicts at a fixed wage, or, it may be conducted on the profiting-sharing or co-operative plan. Which of these is better might well depend on local circumstances and the nature of the work and would be subject to the economic laws which decide such matters outside. Presumably the profit sharing plan would be better, but it is a technical question which I do not care to discuss. What I am aiming at is the possibility of a system of prison labor in which the state takes no part other than in giving shelter and working space and as much individual freedom for the operatives

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as may be needful for success. Such a system would approximate closely to outside conditions.

Some years ago an energetic inmate of the Arizona State Prison organized the industry of making hair goods among the inmates which had previously been carried on individually, and I understand, through his intelligence and knowledge of business methods, brought it to a considerable degree of success.

Another case has just come to my attention, which is the cause of the present article. It is to be found in the Michigan Branch Penitentiary at Marquette, where a group of men, under the guidance of an enthusiastic and indefatigable inmate, have associated themselves together in a weaving business, making mats, doilies, centerpieces for dinner tables and similar articles. These are shipped by parcel post to purchasers and one-tenth of the proceeds is donated to the Red Cross. Fortunately this prison is lucky enough to have a rational warden who has been able to shake himself free from the shackles of prejudice and precedent and thus to give all possible encouragement to those men who are trying to help themselves by learning a useful trade, and by accumulating funds which will enable them to support their families and to get a start in life on their discharge. I could give you more details, but my advice is to drop a line to the originator and manager of this industry and inquire for yourself. You will receive in reply one of the most interesting letters which you are likely to get in many a day, boiling over with enthusiasm and with the determination to live down the past and make life a howling success. The letter itself will be an inspiration to you, something you can lay aside and take out and read when you are downcast and think the world is not giving you your dues, a letter which you can show to your friends as a sample of what a convict may become under proper encouragement—and by encouragement I do not mean boosting, but being given a chance to develop what is already in him through his own efforts. You will see in it the solution of many of the difficulties inhering in the prison problem, and the crying need for a rational and benevolent administration, the sort of administration which helps men to help themselves.

The address of this prisoner is *George C. Wagner, Box 1025, Marquette, Michigan.* But let me quote from his letter.

"For two years I have persistently plodded, slaved until all hours in the night, devoted *all* my spare *minutes* to the one and only object: Success. I've had to start slow, not only on account of lack of funds, but because it was 'not done' in prisons, this sending out by parcel post articles made here. Always will I give Warden Russell credit for his approval of my scheme. Even I could not believe at first that it would be allowed, so I again asked 'Do you mean, Warden, that I can go ahead and send out say 2,000 circular letters?' and he answered 'Yes.' Then, of course, where was I, who knew no one, without relations of any kind in this country, going to dispose of my articles? . . ."

"The distinct object of my enterprise is that I want to build up, rebuild

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my *self*-confidence. Next comes my absolute, determined resolve to have money enough when I shall be released to buy the things I need, and have a sum of money on hand large enough that I need not fear immediate want or take any old job. Next comes my desire to be of service to my fellow inmates to any extent they let me. . . ."

"I tell you, sir, at times I'm proud (I hope not conceited) when a fellow comes along with a letter to the effect that a baby is coming or new shoes to be bought, or flour is higher again, etc., etc., and asks to get a little more work and I can answer: 'You bet your life; dig right in, old man, and how much money would you like to have right now?' But I don't ask, don't want, sympathy. I want just the opportunity to furnish these pretty products of mine to folks outside."

"I *court* any correspondence, *want* it, *beg* for it, that may lead to sales of the mats. I'm never too busy to write business. I will sit up or stay up till I fall down. For I *must* succeed, sir, and darn it, I will!"

Prison industries of this kind have the great advantage over the ordinary sort that they foster independence and originality. The man who is made to spend years in prison at work in which he has no direct interest is being trained to be nothing but a common laborer all his life. He who feels that he has a direct personal interest of a financial kind in his work, who is given the opportunity to devise and develop practical business methods, that man is the one who is being prepared for a position of responsibility when his debt to the state is paid and he becomes free. Nobody can question the fact that one of the best incentives to a workman is a direct interest in his work, the feeling that skill, industry and perseverance bring a reward to him. This spirit should be instilled into every man from the very day of his entrance into confinement. We all know Mr. Osborne's idea of the Mutual Welfare League as a means of training in citizenship, as a preparation for freedom. In exactly the same way, the system of independent industry fosters business independence; it is a rational preparation for success. To what extent this is possible can only be determined by experiment, but it is an experiment worth making, because it means the making of men.

Sunlight

The editorial writer of the New York *Sun* has once more set his imagination—such as it is—to work, and speaks of prison correspondence as "a national correspondence school for female corruption." He continues: "The lure of the evil doer for those who begin to find an upright life tedious induces women to write."

We recommend those ladies who "begin to find an upright life tedious" to turn their attention to reading the editorials of the *Sun*. They will find enough to satisfy the most depraved taste in the way of conceited language and morbid fiction—much more than they could possibly secure from convicts, and besides, it is cheaper. Prison correspondence is censored, and each letter costs two cents, but the *Sun* can shed its peculiar light everywhere where one has the price to pay for it—one cent.

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Letter From A Member

Query—Is the writer of the following letter one of those ladies whom the New York *Sun* suspects of having "begun to find an upright life tedious?"

The prisoner James M——— referred to is the writer of the letter signed J. M. M. which was published in the last CRITIC.

July 4, 1917

My dear Dr. Stokes:—

I am going to accept your invitation to "step up to the desk and report." I am 47 years old, the principal of a school, and have been teaching 30 years. When I took up the LEAGUE work last August, you assigned to me, as correspondents, James M——— and Joseph C———, both young men in the twenties.

While I have an approving conscience (which is the only thing that really matters to me), I suppose I have, especially in the case of M———, done things which you would consider "coddling." I know that I have written what some evil minded wardens might consider improper, but please note that the prisoners did not misunderstand my motives or misinterpret my language.

Now for the results. Jimmie M———, a professional pickpocket from childhood, decided that he would try earning his living honestly. Though he was in disgrace, undergoing "solitary," and though the warden would not recommend him to the Humanitarians and opposed his application for parole, the governor became favorably interested and told Jimmie to have me get him a job and he would favor his release upon parole. Upon my satisfying the Parole Board that I had done this, Jimmie was paroled and permitted to come to me. He has been here five weeks, living as a member of our family and working for one of my friends who is as desirous as I to help him.

Joe C——— has ceased to be a stubborn, resentful, troublesome prisoner, has become orderly and been promoted from the coal mine to the tailor shop. I know that several causes other than my letters have contributed to this result, but patient perseverance in writing to him overcame the distrust which was at the bottom of all his troubles.

I realize, I suspect, as keenly as you do, the need of discretion on the part of all of us, but I want you to realize that no one of us can tell exactly what is discreet for another. The right motive may make proper what would otherwise be improper. Also, I want to tell you that a little motherly "coddling" will do some of these boys more good than anything else.

Partly as a result of my LEAGUE correspondence I have become deeply interested in the prison question, have got in touch with several prisoners, officials and workers and have been serving some time as secretary of our local Prison Reform Committee.

Sincerely,

S. M. F.

More Lies

The New York Commissioner of Correction has been "investigating" the LEAGUE and has given his results to the press. According to the New York *Sun* they consist in the discovery that "Kindly old ladies in Gurnee, Illinois, and silly little girls in Sturgis, Michigan, have been induced by the pathos of appeals from the O. E. Library League to write to thugs and dips in New York City prisons." On the basis of this important discovery he proposes to annihilate the LEAGUE.

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The funny part of it is that the LEAGUE has never had anything whatever to do with people in these places writing to New York prisoners, and the funniness becomes pathetic when it appears that Mr. Lewis has not learned, after his recent expedition into the realm of fiction, to limit himself to facts. As a short "story" writer Mr. Lewis should be even a greater success than as a prison administrator.

Zoological note. The squid is a marine animal which conceals itself by emitting a cloud of inky fluid; it withdraws attention from its doings by attracting it to the ink. The human squid, not being provided by nature with ink sacs, makes use of printer's ink and the columns of New York newspapers.

Prisoners of War

If any of our members would care to correspond with interned prisoners or prisoners of war (not convicts) in the United States or Canada, will they please send in their names? This is out of our ordinary line of work, but as there is likely to be some demand during the war and as we already have requests, we wish to be prepared. All such correspondence is censored, but presumably is not otherwise interfered with.

For this purpose we desire only strictly loyal American citizens, who are broad enough to feel that an enemy in misfortune is still a man. All political discussions, sympathetic or the reverse, would be out of place and presumably forbidden by the censor. A knowledge of the German language would be of help, but is not essential.

The LEAGUE has great need of more correspondents and more cash.

To the O. E. Library League, *Date*.....

1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.:

I shall contribute each month for the work of the LEAGUE the sum checked in the margin, until you receive a notice from me to the contrary. This contribution will be sent as near the first of the month as practicable.

My contribution is to be used for the general expenses of the LEAGUE, including publication of the CRITIC.

for PRISON WORK.....

for .....

$5.00	50 cts.
$4.00	40 cts.
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***Name and Address*.....**

.....

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The Forward

We have received the first two numbers of *The Forward*, a monthly paper edited and printed by the inmates of the New Mexico State Penitentiary at Santa Fe. The starting of a periodical in these difficult times is an encouraging feature of prison life which might well be imitated in other penal institutions. The editor has adopted the wise policy of not attempting to make it a summary of current news, which must of necessity be behind the times, and is aiming to give information regarding the penitentiary and the penal system of New Mexico, which is very interesting reading. Even though a small prison paper cannot expect to emulate the larger prison publications, it affords an opportunity for training in writing and printing, and even a small sheet may attain to a high degree of excellence. We shall watch the progress of *The Forward* with great interest. The subscription is 50 cents a year.

Membership In The O. E. Library League

Registration fee, 10 cents; subscription to the CRITIC, 25 cents; voluntary contributions, if desired. Free to prisoners.

Names of Prisoners will positively be given only to members of the LEAGUE. It is entirely a waste of time for others to ask for them.

Prisoners' Aid Associations

Note—The CRITIC will be glad to publish every now and then the addresses of associations having for their object securing employment for prisoners, or aiding their families, provided they are not of purely local scope; also of local or state societies in states in whose prisons the LEAGUE is active. The wide circulation of the CRITIC in many prisons offers a good means of attracting the attention of inmates.

The O. E. Library League, H. N. Stokes, Librarian, 1207 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. National scope. Specialty, finding correspondents for prisoners. Membership, including receipt of the CRITIC, free to prisoners; for others, 10 cts. registration and 25 cts. a year for the CRITIC. Secures employment for its prison members through *The Humanitarians*.

The Humanitarians, Winston Salisbury, Secretary; E. C. Landis, Treasurer, Lansing, Kansas. National scope. Secures work in advance and furnishes transportation when necessary. Annual membership for the public, $2, including official organ; for prisoners, $1, including services of employment department.

The Central Howard Association, F. Emory Lyon, Superintendent, 1245 Monon Building, 440 South Dearborn Street, Chicago. Special field, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Gives assistance to discharged or paroled prisoners by signing first friend papers, securing employment, furnishing tools, clothing and transportation; also board until pay-day when needed.

National Committee on Prisons, 15 Park Row, New York City. Operates a free employment bureau for ex-prisoners, men and women. Scope national.

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