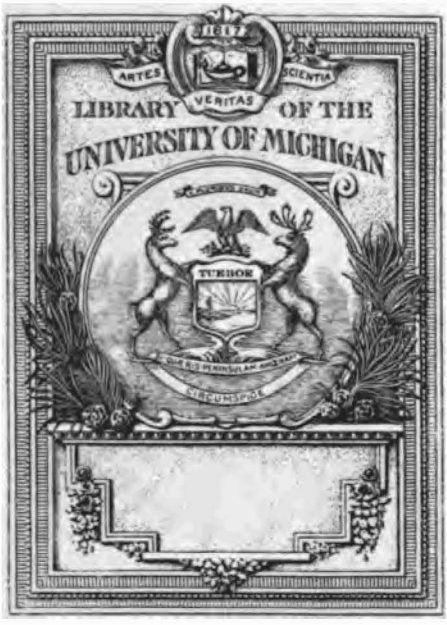
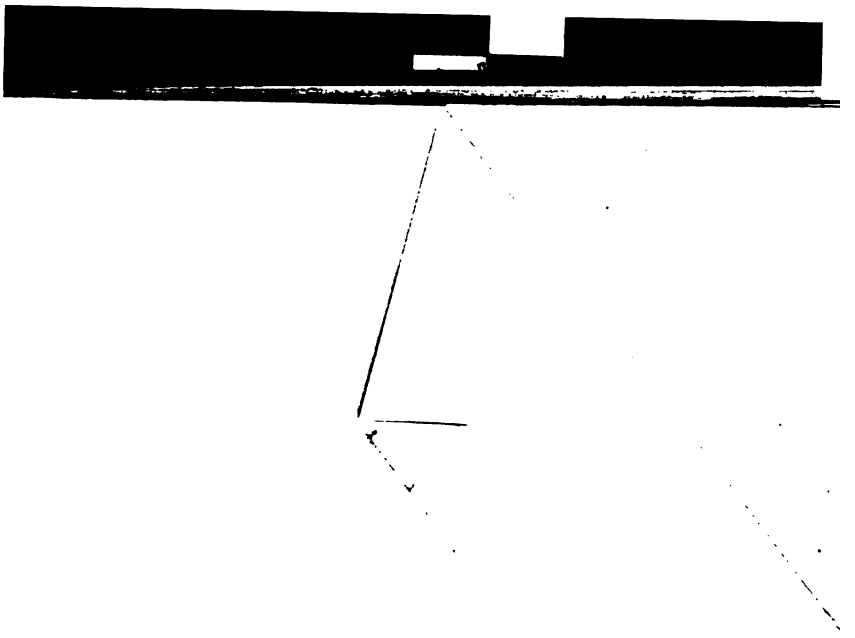

ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR



SOCIETY'S MISFITS

Madeleine Z. Doty

SOCIETY'S MISFITS

BY

MADELEINE Z. DOTY

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1916

Published September, 1916

NOTE AND DEDICATION

It is my pleasant duty to thank the good friends who have made this book possible. If it had not been for the ready assistance of Mr. Thomas Mott Osborne, I should not have secured permission to spend my voluntary days in prison, nor without his example should I perhaps have had the courage to undertake the adventure. Also to my companion in misery, Elizabeth Watson, who elected to try prison life with me, do I owe much, and to my friend Dorothy Osborne, whose sympathy, quick understanding, and devoted service to prison reform have made her a valuable ally in securing the material set forth in this book.

To *The Century* and *Good Housekeeping* thanks are due for permission to reprint the papers originally published in their pages.

And last but not least do I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the men and women confined in Auburn and Sing Sing prisons who have laid bare their hearts with reckless generosity and given of their all in order to throw light on the prison problem and improve conditions for all men, women, and children confined behind bars. To them I dedicate this book.

July 3, 1916, Sparta, New Jersey.

INTRODUCTION

By Thomas Mott Osborne

"Oh that mine enemy would write a book," was the cry of the ancient teacher, thirsting to become a literary critic.

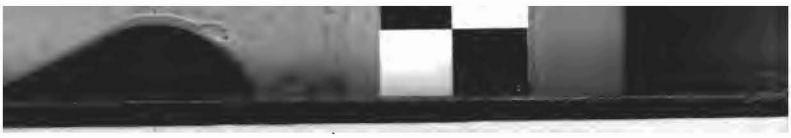
"Blessed is he that hath nothing to say and cannot be induced to say it" is the cry of the modern critic, reflecting upon the good old times before "best-sellers" dropped in a continuous stream from our over-worked presses.

The conclusion is obvious: in these days no one should write a book who can possibly help it.

This book is one of those which the author could not help writing; the facts she has learned must be told. Whether or not the book needs an introduction is a different matter; but Miss Doty has asked me to write one and as it happens that I have some knowledge of the events and persons described, it may not come amiss for me to bear witness to the truths that she has written.

. . . . . .

The first of the following chapters gives the experience of Miss Doty when she and her friend, Miss Watson, spent a brief period as inmates of the New York State Prison for Women at Auburn. I had the privilege of arranging with the warden for their reception and I was "our host gazing



solicitously after us from his car," when they started on their adventure. As a matter of fact my gaze was rather more than solicitous; for I did not altogether approve, knowing through personal experience something of the nerve-racking strain ahead of them.

The stay of "Maggie Martin" in the Woman's Prison was valuable in giving the Commission on Prison Reform, upon which Miss Doty and I were both serving, a vivid impression of the manner of treatment of our women convicts. It brought home to us the knowledge that the stupid and brutal system, which was so lamentable a failure in the men's prisons, was quite as bad, if not worse, in a woman's prison.

. . . . . .

The second chapter, "Maggie Martin's Friends," is an even more depressing tale. It is the story of a noble effort — the struggle of the women prisoners at Auburn, aided by conscientious friends from outside, to participate in the wonderful movement which was transforming the men's prison from a hopeless sink of human failure to a great school of genuine reform. It is also the story of the failure of that effort, because of the hopeless, crass stupidity of the matrons in control at the prison, who had the chance of a lifetime to make themselves a power for good and were too indifferent and too ignorant to take advantage of it. "Against stupidity the gods themselves struggle in vain." The moral of

the experience was that without an intelligent head no prison system can be run intelligently. The failure of the Prisoners' League at the Woman's Prison at Auburn does not reflect upon the system or the prisoners; it does reflect seriously upon the officials whose duty it was to coöperate.

. . . . . .

Of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth chapters I can also speak with some authority, for I know most if not all the men whose stories Miss Doty has recorded. There can be only one question about these stories. If what the men say is true, it is high time a more comprehensive examination was made into our juvenile institutions and their results. But is it true? No one who knows the men and hears the tales from their own lips can doubt it for a moment. It is one great advantage of the new prison system at Auburn and Sing Sing that for the first time our convicts are willing to tell the truth. They have told it to Miss Doty under the pledge that their confidences shall be respected; and they are pathetically anxious to "save the kids."

The facts are now before the public; what are intelligent people in the outside world going to do about it?

. . . . . .

Regarding the seventh chapter — the case of "Happy Jack" Mulrany, I have no first-hand knowledge; but if any one can read his pathetic

letter without burning remorse for his own share in the death of its writer, then he has a tougher conscience than I can understand. It ought to make some of the believers in capital punishment spend a few wakeful hours at night.

Recall the end of Stave Three in Dickens' Christmas Carol, where from under the robe of the Ghost of Christmas Present there emerge two children:

> They were a boy and a girl. Yellow, meager, ragged, scowling, wolfish, but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shriveled hand, like that of age, had pinched and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.
>
> Scrooge started back, appalled. . . .
>
> "Spirit, are they yours?" Scrooge could say no more.
>
> "They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!" cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand toward the city. "Slander those who tell it ye! Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse! And bide the end!"
>
> "Have they no refuge or resource?" cried Scrooge.
>
> "Are there no prisons?" said the Spirit, turning on him

for the last time with his own words. "Are there no workhouses?"

The bell struck twelve.

These words were written in 1843, seventy-three years ago; and despite much social progress we are still sending our children of Ignorance and Want to the reformatory and prison, to the street and the brothel.

. . . . . .

The last chapter deals with an institution with which I am familiar, "The Little Commonwealth." Hidden away in a happy little valley in Dorsetshire, this charming little institution has far exceeded the anticipations of its founders. In December, 1910 a meeting was held at the home of Mr. George Montagu in London, to hear about the Junior Republic movement in America. At the conclusion of the meeting a committee of three was appointed to stimulate interest and see how the Junior Republic principles could be adapted for England. The committee consisted of Mr. Montagu, Mr. Cecil Chapman, one of the London magistrates, and myself as a purely honorary member. The movement was very ably and carefully conducted and resulted in the establishment of The Little Commonwealth about two years later. I visited it in the fall of 1913 and found it all that Miss Doty has described. The genius of Mr. Lane, the superintendent, and the sympathetic understanding of Mr. and Mrs. Montagu and their friends have

founded an institution which is more truly democratic in its application of vital principles to education than any other I know.

. . . . . .

After reading the book, you will easily understand why Miss Doty could not resist writing it. She could not help calling upon the good people of this country to "save the kids." She has done so with force and sincerity; and her appeal will be heard.

T. M. OSBORNE.

Sing Sing Prison,
August 6, 1916.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I—IN A WOMAN'S PRISON

PART II—BEHIND REFORMATORY WALLS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PART I

IN A WOMAN'S PRISON

INTRODUCTION

Our whole penal system, the criminal law, the courts, reformatories and prisons, stand on the eve of a great revolution. The old system of punishment which crushed and broke has failed. Man by these methods has been made worse rather than better. The released convict has proved a greater menace to society than he was before he fell into the clutches of the law. The collective mind has awakened to the fact and declared only those methods which reform to be desirable. If punishment has failed then the new system of education must be tried. The world at last recognizes that law is for man, not man for the law; that the penal system is not sacred; that law, where it does not meet the needs of society, like all else, must give way and change. The articles in this book symbolize the change going forward. They are not formal or statistical but human. For that is the key-note of the change — the putting of humanity into the law. Intelligence of the mind is nothing without that of the heart. Factories may be run by

rule of thumb, but individuals are remade through the soul.

Perhaps my own personal experience as a lawyer well illustrates this general awakening. At graduation I started forth like the average young lawyer. It seemed essential to have a beautifully equipped office, with rows on rows of leather-bound books guarding the precedents of all the dead judges of all the ages. But my bank account was just large enough to cover two months' office rent. Then came the idea of a compromise. I would have an office on Fifth Avenue, and live in a tenement. By day I sat in leather-bound chairs, handled leather-bound books and waited for rich clients. At night I climbed five flights of stairs over crying babies, despairing mothers, passed boys and men fallen into the clutches of the police, and on their way to the station house for assault or robbery. And gradually a curious thing happened. My days for which all had been sacrificed grew tiresome, while the Eastside evenings throbbed with life and fascination. But business prospered. Through the receivership appointments bestowed by a friendly judge there was money to make ends meet. But where was the satisfaction? In the bankruptcy cases when

receiver, attorney, auctioneer, and appraisers had been paid, there was rarely anything left for the creditors. It became evident that the practice of law afforded no opportunity for rendering justice. It was merely a game, a game between clever men to see which could be cleverest. For such a career I cared little. It was the individual, not the case, that was interesting. When Johnny Jones in the apartment below stole a bucket of coal because his mother and baby sister were freezing, it seemed vastly important to go to court and explain. The law said Johnny was a thief. But he was n't. It was absurd to argue whether he did or did n't steal when the real question was *why* did he steal. Then the reform school made Johnny a menace. The baby died and Johnny's mother went to the poorhouse. Altogether society paid pretty dearly for that bucket of coal. It was evident dead judges and musty precedents were not good guides. The criminal law needed to be taken out of the hands of legal-minded machines and remade in the image of Christ.

There were thousands of men to practise law according to maxim. Women lawyers must bring love, intelligence of the heart, into the busi-

ness. It was then I read John Galsworthy's "Justice," and a whole new world opened. I saw that courts, and prisons, might be dedicated to the regeneration instead of the persecution, punishment, and destruction of man. It was no longer possible to practise conventional law. For four years I worked with others to remake the Manhattan Children's Court. In a few years we had secured a new court building, five special children's judges, twenty probation officers, and, most important of all, a careful examination of each case. To-day no child is tried without finding out the *why* of the misdeed. In time the criminal law for adults will follow the same course. But reformatories and prisons still loom like black blots on the landscape. Delinquent children and adults continue to come forth worse than they go in. Here and there social workers are making mighty efforts to reform conditions. In externals they are often successful. The gray, grim, barred-in reformatory is frequently replaced by prosperous farms dotted with cottages. Yet the percentage of reformations is not what it should be. Again intelligence of the mind is nothing without intelligence of the heart. Lawyers are dedicated

to the law, social workers to service, but the latter no more than the former can triumph, when regeneration is attempted by scientific theory and maxim. Man is not a machine. From the children's court I turned to prison work. I became a member of the Prison Reform Commission of which Thomas Mott Osborne was chairman. When Mr. Osborne spent his week in prison I knew that he had found the way to get at the heart of the problem. The student of prison problems needs to know the prisoner, his needs, and aspirations. That was why I made my prison experiment, not to teach, but to learn. Those days in jail throbbed with big moments. Never have I felt so bound to any group of women. Cut off from life, made an outcast, the prisoner feels for his fellows a compassionate affection that transcends common relationships. In every-day life we grow selfish and hesitate to relinquish even a small comfort for a friend, but in prison no sacrifice is too great. Even punishment in the cooler is gladly accepted as the price to be paid for a chance to do a kind deed. This beauty of spirit is dazzling. It shows that with the capacity for misdeeds lies an equally brilliant capacity for good. Just a little twist in the

steering gear and your gangster and gunman is smashing up evil and fighting for right as relentlessly as he formerly broke into your houses and stole your jewelry. In the two succeeding articles —"Maggie Martin, 933" and "Maggie Martin's Friends"— I have left out all discourse on penology and tried to get at the heart of the problem. I have described prison life as I found it, hoping by so doing to shed light on a problem so many are eager to solve. If I have demonstrated that real reform can only be accomplished by, with, and through the convict, I have fulfilled my purpose. Wisdom to dispense justice comes from a study of man not from a study of law.

> "Be not dishearten'd, *affection* shall solve the problem of freedom yet.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Were you looking to be held together by lawyers? Or by an agreement on a paper? Or by arms? Nay, nor the world, nor any living thing will so cohere."

SOCIETY'S MISFITS

"MAGGIE MARTIN, 933"

ON Monday, November 3, 1913, I awoke with beating heart. That day was the day. But suppose something should prevent the adventure? Then I laughed. To be fighting to get behind prison-bars with as much determination as the man caught in a misdeed struggles to escape was amusing. A queer topsy-turvy world, with its continual battle for that which is denied.

I jumped up and looked at myself in the glass. I wished I looked stronger. I knew the prison warden and the members of the commission questioned my strength. They said I might suffer harm from the convicts for some were colored women of hard and vicious character, occasionally violent, and I must look out for the blows. A little shiver of excitement attacked me. I was glad Elizabeth was to share my fate. Companionship breeds courage. She, too, I

could see, was excited. We rang for breakfast. Sitting in our little, soft, white beds, we chatted and ate. It was good to be visiting where every physical comfort was perfectly cared for, only it made one soft and prison life very unattractive. The deliciously fragrant coffee and the thin, brown, buttered toast quickly disappeared as we speculated on what breakfast the following morning would be like.

All that day we wandered about aimlessly trying to curb our impatience. We visited moving-picture shows, and saw scenes of prison life far from reassuring. We had arranged to enter prison early in the evening. A policeman was to be at the station when the New York train arrived and conduct us to the prison as regularly committed convicts just up from the city. In this way we would hide our identity. With care we had constructed a criminal past: we were to be Lizzie Watson and Maggie Martin, forgers, caught in the same deal and sent up for from one year and six months to two years and six months.

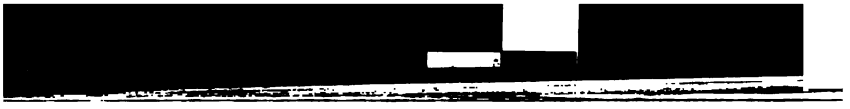
After a gay little dinner-party we whirled down to the station in the electric. Soon the sound of the whistle announced the train, and we stepped out bravely across the platform to the

waiting policeman. As we passed out of the station and up the street I could see our host gazing solicitously after us from his car. All the bright, cheery comfort of his home flashed upon me, and the desire for adventure ceased. I was glad it was dark and that few people passed. I sensed the feeling of disgrace this forced walk by a policeman's side, past the high, forbidding, gray wall, must engender. I wondered if Elizabeth also was beginning to wish she had never come. Then we reached a great iron gate, and it opened and clanked behind us. In an instant the big outer world had vanished. We were shut in by a sinister gray mass with barred gate. A sickening sense of impotence filled me. Pride said I must go on, but I was afraid. I had reduced myself to a will-less thing that could be moved about at the whim of unseen authority.

What lay inside that silent building? Up the path with reluctant steps I journeyed. Why had I been such a fool? Surely my knowledge of prisons did not need this experiment to convince me of their vileness. But my sensations belied the thought. No written word had ever made me realize how great may be the fear of what lies behind those gray stones and barred

windows. Only once before had I experienced such a dread, and that the day before an operation. The strongest man is shattered by horror of the unknown.

But we had reached the front door, and it was opened, and we were thrust inside. I heard the policeman ask if he was needed, and then he left, and with him disappeared the last friendly face. I longed to clutch Elizabeth, but two matrons in blue uniform and white aprons stood guard. These women did not speak. They had evidently expected the arrival of two convicts, but they gave no greeting and made no inquiry. We might have been four-legged animals or express packages for aught their expression showed. They were curious and a little fearful. We were curious and very fearful. We gazed at one another like dogs at bay. Having sized us up, they hurried through their disagreeable task. Without explanation or comment we were led through twisting passages and doors. Then began that persistent note of prison, the locking and unlocking of doors, the jangling of keys, which is forever breaking the silence and beating in on one the knowledge, " You 're locked in; you can't get out."



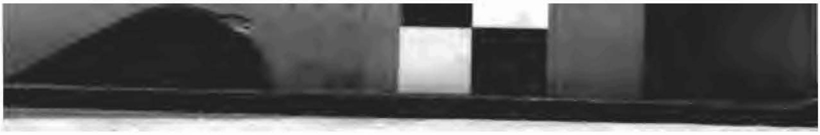
"MAGGIE MARTIN, 933"

We passed down a long corridor on which were the barred doorways of twenty cells. There was light in the corridor, but none in the cells, and I wondered how many breathing, restless creatures were gazing out. The jangling of keys and our footsteps must have told of our approach. At the end of the corridor in a small room was a bath-tub. Here the procession halted. Then more jangling of keys, and a little colored convict was released to aid with the task in hand.

In utter silence the ceremony proceeded, Elizabeth and I watching breathlessly what was to happen next. A sheet was spread for each of us, and on it we stood, taking off our garments one by one. It was all like a dream. The solemnity was so great we might have been undergoing an initiation into some fraternity. I had an insane desire to giggle, but the curious and hard eyes of the matron were upon me. Besides, my clothes seemed to be making no impression. I had forgotten before entering to remove my watch and gold cuff-links, and my long brown ulster had just come from London. Surely these things would be noticed. Moreover, only a few hours before I had bathed and put on fresh white

underwear. But this also roused no comment. Evidently many convicts on entering prison must be clean and well-dressed.

Then came the bath, taken in public, with the aid of the little colored convict. Under direction, she scrubbed and scrubbed, we being told to keep hands off. Some one originated the theory that all convicts are dirty, and truly it is on that theory that the whole prison system is built. A convict means dirt, physical, mental, and moral, and is treated accordingly. That this may not be the case makes no impression. I was a convict; therefore, I was full of vermin. I saw Elizabeth's head being ducked into the same water in which she was bathed. With shrinking, I begged to be let off until the morrow, pleading a headache. To my surprise, the request was granted. But the next instant I was told to bend my head, and the contents of a dark-green bottle were poured upon me and rubbed in. The penetrating and biting odor of kerosene pervaded everything. A hot wave of indignation flooded me. Two days before my hair had been washed and waved and was soft and sweet-smelling. Surely my head might be clean, even supposing I had forged a check. But no,



GENERAL INFORMATION.

NAME, *Maggie Martin* Identification No. A 933 Color, *W*
Aliases,
Term, *1-6 to 2-6* Date of Sentence, *Nov. 1 - 1913*
County, *New York* Date of Reception, *Nov. 3 - 1913*
Crime, *Forgery* Residence (HOME), *New York City*
Criminal Act, *of checks*

AUBURN PRISON. (S) (M) (L) AUBURN, N. Y.

5 ft. 5 in

Height	1 m *65.0*	Head lgth	*18.4*	L Foot	*23.2*	Color L Eye	Class *2*	Age *33* Born in 18*80*
Stretch	1 m *72.0*	Head wdth	*14.4*	L Mid F	*10.8*		Areola *y d*	Apparent Age *33*
Trunk	*87.0*	Cheek wdth	*13.0*	L Lit F	*8.2*		Periph. *Az*	Nativity *N. Y. City*
Curve		R Ear lgth	*6.1*	L Cubit	*44.4*		Pecul.	Occupation *Clerk*

Remarks relative to Measurements

P E D C U B H G T

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Forehead		Nose				R Ear		
Inc. *in*		Profile	Bridge *rect*			Border *[illegible]*	Hair *grey*	Beard
Hght. *m*			Base *el*			Lobe *[illegible]*	Complexion *sal*	
Width *m*		DIMENSIONS	Height *m*	Projection *m*	Breadth *m*	Teeth *9 ab*	Weight *131*	
Pecul.			Pecul. *pointed*			Chin *pro*	Build *med*	

STATE OF NEW YORK,
Office of Superintendent of State Prisons,
BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION,
Capitol, Albany.

Examined *Nov. 5 - 1913*
By *J. McClelland* at *Auburn*
Reexamined
By at

Identification card of Maggie Martin

Photograph by Brown Brothers

Gambling — these are the boys who form the never-ending procession to the reform schools

I was a convict, and red tape must triumph here as elsewhere.

Only one small towel, the size of a table napkin, was given to dry both head and body. A coarse, white cotton night-gown, clean, but old, bearing the name of the last wearer, was furnished. Clad in this and barefooted, I was led to a cell and locked in. A few minutes later I heard the reassuring sound of the door in the next cell being closed and locked, and I knew that for the night at least Elizabeth was my neighbor. I tapped on the wall to make sure, and immediately there came a satisfying answer. I examined my bed. The mattress was covered with stains, but the sheets were clean, though coarse. I crawled into them. At first I did not notice the steely hardness of the bed. I was too occupied with my straw pillow. But the mattress rested on iron slats, and as the night advanced I began to trace the exact location of every one.

My light had been switched off, but through the bars the light from the corridor filtered in. Whenever I opened my eyes, that barred door obtruded itself. It glared down upon me, it seemed to run up against me, it haunted me, it

forever reiterated the fact, "You are an animal shut in a cage." The little iron bed, the wooden stand in the corner, with its basin and cup of water, the three-legged stool, the yellow walls, the painted window — all were lost sight of in the presence of that barred door. That and that only, with the endless jangling of keys, became the center of existence. Drawn by a weird fascination, I crept out of bed and to the door, and, grasping the cold iron, shook it. But all was secure. Then I pressed my face against the bars and listened breathlessly. I could hear the breathing of other prisoners and occasionally a sigh. What were they dreaming or feeling? Already I knew the worst feature of the prison system — the brutal officialdom that treated human beings as though they were not human, as though they were cogs in a machine. Then I heard footsteps, the jangling of keys. The night matron was making her hourly round, and I scurried back to bed. Down the corridor she came, pausing at doors to shake them and jangle those keys, intent on reminding us of our degradation and helplessness.

All night I tossed and turned on my pillow. The kerosene from my hair had made it sticky

and vile. I choked with the odor, and, seizing my towel, vainly tried to rub it off; but it permeated everything. Frequently I knocked softly on the wall, and always there came an answering rap, and I knew that Elizabeth, too, was restless.

A dirty, yellow light struggled through the window. Morning had come at last. There were sounds of activity in the adjoining cells. A gray-haired elderly matron in blue uniform and white apron came to my bars and peered in. Her face was lined and sour; she uttered no greeting, merely gazed at me from head to foot, as though I were an animal in the zoo, and remarked: "A new one, eh? Came last night," and then moved on. I had a terrible sense of injury; surely she ought to see I was n't a criminal. But perhaps there is no distinguishing mark.

The little colored girl who had assisted the night before was moving busily about, helping the matron. Food had arrived, and she was distributing it. Slices of bread were left between the bars to be plucked off by the inmates. Then later the cell door was unlocked and a mug of coffee and a bowl of stew were handed in, all in

absolute silence. The coffee was only dish-water, the stew chiefly a thick flour paste. I remembered yesterday's breakfast, and contented myself with bread.

After feeding-time the dishes were collected, and the little convict took them to the sink at the end of the corridor. I envied her her task, as I am sure every inmate did, just to be out beyond the barred door doing something, anything. The minutes dragged on. I had no clothes, so I lay still. After what seemed hours, the matron returned, this time accompanied by a convict, laden with clothes, and the little colored trusty. In the presence of these three I was ordered to take off my nightgown. Underwear many sizes too large was given to me, and a heavy, coarse petticoat of bedticking, also much too large, and finally the thick, white canvas dress, frayed and gray from washing. It was all in one piece, buttoning tightly down the front. The sleeves were much too short, the collar too low. Anything more unbecoming and degrading would be hard to imagine. It reminded me of pictures of the clothes worn by slaves. A pair of speckled knit stockings and heavy, round-toed shoes completed my toilet. These shoes seemed to give the

matron much pleasure, for she said, "See what fine shoes you 've been given."

I knew there was no good protesting, but I wanted to curse. Prison has a curious way of dragging to the surface all the profanity one has ever heard. Nothing else seemed adequately to express one's hate and indignation. I could hear Elizabeth making her toilet. Once I heard the matron's voice say: "Eh, there, git spry, git spry! Where do you think you are?" We had both been unmercifully hurried, for we were wanted in the office. As we left our cells I glanced at Elizabeth. There had been no mirror to view myself, so I was not prepared for the transformation. With hair slicked back and greasy from kerosene, prison shoes sticking out from a dress much too short, she was a ludicrous object, and I doubled up with mirth and snickered. Laughter in prison is a sin. The matron turned on me fiercely.

"Be still! Don't you know where you are? If ye hain't ever been in prison before, you 're in one now."

I pulled myself together and put my hand over my mouth, but my whole being shook. The gloom and horror of the night vanished in the

light of the enormous comedy we were enacting. But I did not wish to go to the cooler, as the punishment cell is called, and with a supreme effort I controlled myself. Despite the terrible rush in which we were hustled into our clothes, we waited for a long time in a hallway before being called. We sat patiently side by side. I longed to lean over and touch Elizabeth and whisper, but our matron stood guard like a dragon, and when Elizabeth's eyes once sought the floor to gaze at a cat, she stormed:

"Stop looking at that cat! Look at the wall!"

Did the system of nagging ever end? Was the prison system planned with the view to filling the heart with rage and hate? It is unwise if so, for prisons are emptied on an average every five years and the inmates sent back into the world.

In the office our names, addresses, names of relatives, criminal career, etc., were taken down in business manner. Then we were returned to our cells. In my ten by six room I found dinner piled on my stool, though it was only shortly after eleven. But to-day was election day, and a holiday for the matrons. Holidays, periods of rejoicing for officials, are days of torture for

prisoners. On these occasions and on Sundays the convict is safely disposed of by locking him in his cell for interminable hours. I had thought much of election day, but somehow my interest was gone. It seemed unimportant who was elected mayor. Only one thing mattered, those gray walls. For this prison also does: it makes the convict center on self, on his physical discomfort, on a barred door. It suppresses human love, and robs life of its value.

I looked at my dinner. A great mass of coarse cabbage filled the plate. Hidden under it was a piece of corned beef. It was too revolting to touch. I made an attempt at the boiled potato, but it was soggy and cold, and I gave it up. In a bowl was a quantity of apple-butter, but this was sour, and I left it untouched. Bread was again my meal. When the dinner things were removed, we were told to keep a supply of bread, for no supper would be served.

We had no plates, so I piled my three slices of bread on my stool and sat on the bed. Then began an interminable afternoon. Minute after minute, hour after hour, dragged by. I paced my floor and sat on my bed and paced my floor again. There was not even a Bible to read,

nothing to see or do. Often I pressed my face against the bars and listened intently. Two or three times I heard the cooing of a baby. Such a good little baby — a baby that never cried! The mother occupied a cell down the corridor. I had seen her rocking and feeding her child as I passed her barred door in the morning. Born in prison! What a fate for a struggling little soul that had no desire to come into the world! Once as I stood at my door I heard groans, then a voice:

"I 've got the devil in me. I can't stand this; if they don't let me out soon, I 'll smash things."

Another voice urged courage and gave assurance that to-morrow they would have to let us get the air and walk in the yard. A third asked:

"Did you see the new girls?"

One of the previous voices replied:

"Yes, I saw them when they came; they had good clothes." Then one of the former voices said:

"But what did their faces look like?"

At this moment our old dragon came tiptoeing in, and the whisperers were caught. I had been on the point of joining in the conversation. Lucky I did n't, for later I learned the penalty

inflicted: three days of close confinement in the cell on a diet of one slice of bread and one gill of water three times a day; in addition a fine of fifty cents for each day of punishment, and days added to the term of imprisonment. After this excitement and the matron's departure there was no sound. The minutes dragged on. I had no idea whether it was two or six. I had lost all sense of time; all was dull silence. And this was the place where I had been told people were violent and used obscene language. Thus far prisoners seemed creatures but half alive, inclosed in a living tomb.

Occasionally I rapped on the wall, but the answer was feeble, and this bothered me. Presently I could hear that some one was violently sick. The sound was near. It might be from the next cell. I could n't be sure. It was horrible to be unable to give assistance. No one could give any help. No one stirred, and no one dared speak. Later, when the matron made her rounds, she paid no heed to the sufferer, and Elizabeth went uncared for, for it was she who had been ill. Her jar was not emptied until the following morning. Jars used for all purposes are emptied only once a day, and the small hand-

basin filled with fresh water only once in twenty-four hours. I had already washed twice in my basin, and the water was sticky with kerosene. I did not make another attempt that evening. Besides, I no longer cared whether I was clean or not. At supper-time basin and cup were filled with water. We had coffee in the morning, and tea occasionally for dinner, but only this one precious cup of life-giving water. I clutched mine greedily. Half should go for supper and half for the night; my teeth must go unbrushed. Would the day never end!

But twilight came at last. I undressed and went to bed. The bedclothes were heavy and gave little warmth, for the blankets were made of shoddy. I shivered with cold. Once when the night matron made her rounds I called softly and asked for another cover. This woman, like the day matron, was old. She was white-haired, feeble, and very near-sighted. She may have been a pleasing and venerable figure on Sunday, clad in her best, but as a matron she was a failure. She met my request for a blanket with annoyance. She must n't be bothered. It was n't her business to do anything but walk through the buildings. "You should have asked

the day matron in the daytime for a blanket." Through this incident I learned the lesson all convicts soon learn: it is wisest to suffer in silence, for only suicide or severe illness compels attention. But my request for a blanket was unusual, and therefore troubled the old woman. Twice in the night she woke me. Once to say, "You've a wash rug on the floor; use that if you're cold," and the second time to reiterate, "You should n't ask me for a blanket; you ought to ask the day matron."

So I lay and shivered. I was horribly uncomfortable, dirty, hungry, and thirsty, and my bed grew hourly harder. The day had been a horror, but the night was worse. All my innate ugliness rose to the surface. I wanted to grasp my bars and shake them and yell. I would gladly join my convict friend in a smashing orgy if they did n't let me out soon. I, too, had the devil in me. Rebellious thoughts surged in my brain. What right had man so to abuse his fellow-man? What right to degrade him, to step on him, to ignore him? What right to nag and browbeat until he can no longer keep silent, and self-respect flares up?

What wonder if prisoners occasionally are

violent! It would be marvelous if they did not grow to hate all mankind and come out of bondage bent on revenge. My heart ached with pity. One thing at least had been accomplished: I had become in spirit a convict. I was one of them.

The third day I awoke with dread. The end of the week seemed years off. I could never stick it out. I had no idea of the time, but it was still hardly daylight. Just as I determined to rise the matron appeared.

"Why ain't ye up?" she demanded. "You should be dressed when I come. And what business had you to ask for a blanket? I'll teach you yet. Now hurry, make your bed, sweep your floor, and be ready to empty your jar when I git back."

Like the cowed and obedient object I had become, I hastily obeyed. Active rebellion is rare among convicts. There is one consuming desire, to make good and get out. The hunger for freedom, the torture of bars, and the dread of punishment are so great that only the bravest souls refrain from lying, hypocrisy, the betrayal of others, and the surrender of self-respect in order

to win favor and shorten the term of imprisonment.

I quickly despatched my tasks, and stood humbly at my door. When the matron arrived, she merely said, "Come." No instructions were given. Bucket in hand, I followed. Meekly I emptied the jar under her watchful eye. It was evident she awaited some blunder, that I might be reprimanded. The jar needed rinsing. Spying a faucet over a sink, I made for it. At last I had committed an unpardonable sin. The matron was upon me like a hawk.

"What do you mean?" she yelled. "That's where we wash our dishes. Hain't you ever emptied a jar? Hain't you ever used a toilet? Hain't you used to any of the decencies of life?"

For an instant I was stunned, then my sense of humor came to the rescue; only, unlike yesterday, now I did not dare show it. I had become subdued. The dungeon rose before me. My perspective was gone. I seemed a real prisoner. Fear had entered my soul. Patiently I listened to a flood of abuse, finished my task, and returned to my cell.

But this day was to prove eventful, for it was

full of official business. We were to be bertilloned and then examined by the doctor, processes all newcomers go through. In the middle of the morning Elizabeth and I with three others were summoned to the Bertillon-room, in the top of the building. To be bertilloned is to have your photograph taken, your hands, arms, and feet measured, examined for marks of identification, and a general description of your personal appearance made. All this is then inserted in a volume for the rogues' gallery, and you have become a known criminal, easily identified by the police. Just outside a skylight room in the attic we sat, one in front of the other, like children playing choo-choo cars, back to face, that we might not look at or speak to one another. But I was on the end, and when the matron took one of our number to the adjoining room, I faced about and made mental notes. Elizabeth was back of me, and near her a dark-haired girl whom I shall never forget. Her mouth and eyes were passionate, her chin quivered, great tears rolled down her cheeks. Her manner was gentle, but her whole being alive. I wondered if she was French. Why, I don't know, unless it was the grace of her bearing. I asked her name and

what she was up for, the first questions always asked by one convict of another. Her offense was that which Elizabeth and I had chosen, forgery. I felt sure she was interesting, but I had no opportunity for conversation.

According to orders, we let our hair down and took off our shoes and stockings. We sat back to face, with our bare feet curled about the rungs of our chairs like naughty little girls. As the little French girl stepped to the Bertillon-room for her ordeal, I noticed, with something like surprise, her delicate foot. Long ago I had discovered that beauty of figure and fineness of manner are found as often among working-women as among women of wealth, but somehow I had not expected refinement among convicts. That is why, I suppose, I thought the matrons ought to have seen I was n't a criminal, especially when I had on my best manners. With startling clearness it became apparent that there is no criminal type, no criminal appearance, no criminal manner. The man who made the Bertillon-records was not of this opinion, however, for when he finished my history and looked me all over he remarked in a low voice to his companion, "All the stigmata of criminality."

I wondered grimly whether the joke was on me or on the official. After all, the only difference between the criminal and the average man, if there is one, is an exaggeration of type. When the convict is not defective, he is often unusual, original, a variation, and therefore more prone to be at odds with conventional society. He has greater force than the average, and has often gone wrong through misdirected power.

From the Bertillon-room we went back to the ward to await dinner. That over we put on Sunday dress preparatory to a visit to the doctor. This costume consisted of a khaki-colored cotton-drilling shirt-waist and skirt, and was very satisfactory. So arrayed, I found myself stepping out with some importance. My head went up. It had been hard to be dignified clothed in dirty white sail-cloth.

Again we were summoned to the hall for another interminable wait. But if our time was wasted, so was the dragon's, for no prisoner may go about unaccompanied, even though escape from a locked and barred building, surrounded by a guarded stone wall, is impossible. Decorously we sat, eyes to the front, the embodiment of meekness, the eagle eye of the matron upon us.

Presently a young matron, trim, pleasing, and efficient, approached. She and the dragon exchanged tribulations, and the story of my audacious demand for another blanket was related. I felt a second *Oliver Twist.* As the tale progressed, all the pleasing qualities of the young matron vanished. She became a hard, cold, glittering-eyed, vindictive bully. She turned upon me with fury. I was threatened and denounced in angry tones, and warned to remember I was a prisoner and entitled to no *luxuries.*

Through it all I gazed at the wall in vacant, meaningless stare, the proper prison attitude. Then came the sound of many footsteps. A group of prisoners was on its way to school, and must come directly past us. At last I should see some fellow-convicts. A short distance from us the little band halted, to put on the felt shoes they carried over their cumbersome leather ones to deaden sound. At this crucial moment the dragon's voice broke the stillness: "Rise, and face the wall." Elizabeth and I did not stir. Only when the harsh voice rang out again, accompanied by a threat, did we understand and obey. Memories of childhood and the old stand-

ing-in-the-corner punishment came to me. I had an overwhelming desire to peek round my shoulder, but dared not. The company slowly filed past. Out of the corner of my eye I could see Elizabeth, and suddenly the absurdity of our position shook me with silent and nervous laughter.

As we resumed our seats, the doctor's call came. I went first. As I entered the office, I wondered whether the doctor knew who I was. I hoped so, otherwise it might be embarrassing. But immediately I saw he knew nothing. I was merely a regular convict. First came the examination of heart and lungs and then questions concerning my health. When the health-card was disposed of, the doctor turned to my history. I saw he was interested in psychology. He was very kindly, the only official who had treated the make-believe Maggie Martin as a human being. It was difficult to make up a past on the spur of the moment. I stuck to the literal truth where I could. Presently he began to question me about habits. I denied drinking, but admitted smoking. The doctor brightened; he felt he was on the track of my downfall. He tried to lead back to the first cigarette. I grew em-

barrassed, but this was consistent with the part I was playing. The doctor grew gentler. Finally he urged me to make a full confession. I was fairly cornered. I could n't lie any longer; he had been too nice. In a burst of inspiration I gazed shyly in my lap and stammered, "I don't know you well enough yet; perhaps I might later."

So ended my interview. Elizabeth's turn came next, and I was worried lest she should not lie successfully. To my dismay, when she returned she was weeping. Had the doctor discovered her identity or had he told her she had some fatal disease? But the ever-present matron prevented speech.

It was now in the middle of the afternoon, and instead of returning to our cells, we were led to chapel. Once a week, as a great privilege, singing is permitted for an hour. Again my hopes rose high. Now I would see the inmates. But we were placed in the last row, and only the backs of the hundred and twenty women were visible. Tears were still in Elizabeth's eyes, and unable longer to restrain my anxiety, under cover of singing, I managed to whisper:

"What 's the matter?"

"Nothing," came the reply. "I'm all right; will tell you later."

After release I found that Elizabeth, like myself, had been urged by the doctor to tell her story. Elizabeth, endowed with a vivid imagination, had entered completely into her part. She had no difficulty in manufacturing a life history. It was her own make-believe story of anguish that caused her to weep so violently. She told the doctor she was the youngest of a large family of brothers and sisters, and that she did the house-work while they all went out to earn their living. That in consequence she had no income, and was unable to have any enjoyment. She had forged the check to secure the coveted good time. The doctor had proved sympathetic, and Elizabeth cried copiously.

This story is interesting because Elizabeth is the most truthful of persons; yet the power of suggestion was so great that when a past was demanded, involuntarily she furnished one. This fact may well be a warning to investigators in their eager search for the histories of delinquents.

It should be stated here that the warden had intended to take the doctor into his confidence

concerning Maggie Martin and Lizzie Watson, but in some way the matter had been overlooked. Personally, I am glad it was, because the fact that the doctor, a man of intelligence, failed to detect us is strong proof of how completely we had become merged in the prison population.

Reassured by Elizabeth I turned to observe my companions. Seated on high chairs around the side of the room were the officers, so placed that they could see the motions of every convict. I did not dare let my eyes wander, for already I had had a warning look; but I saw with some surprise that many of the prisoners in my line of vision were good-looking, intelligent women. A music-teacher was at the piano. The women sang well, and some with a will, as though even this form of expression was a relief. Then my eye strayed to the song-book. I saw Elizabeth's finger pointing to the words. With a start I realized we were singing

> "Columbia, the gem of the ocean,
> The home of the brave and the *free.*"

Has no official a sense of humor?

At the close of the exercises we were told that we were to move to another ward. I knew that

the ward we had been in was a reception ward, and that after a time newcomers were sent to other wards and put at work. As far as I could gather, the sole object of the reception ward in this prison was to break and subdue the prisoners by isolation. Certainly it was not used for the purpose of observation, for no scientific study of the women was made. The newcomer was merely isolated, given no work or occupation of any kind, all her meals were thrust into her cell, and her only resource was one library book a week. I had experienced forty hours of such confinement, and I shuddered to think of the days, weeks, and sometimes months endured by the average prisoner. Such treatment in the case of a nervous, hysterical woman, eating her heart out with anxiety, over some family problem, easily causes temporary insanity.

Our speedy release had of course been arranged in order that we might have the experience of another ward and the work-shop. Ordinarily, I feel sure, I should have been kept long in isolation. Already I had been spotted as one to be subdued. I held my head too high, and my smiles, even laughter, showed a freedom of spirit not to be tolerated. Elizabeth, with her

tears and her sadness, was being less rudely handled.

It was an easy task to gather up my few possessions, consisting of comb, toothbrush, nightgown, and extra dress, and I was quickly transferred to a ward in another part of the building. This ward, like the first, had a very broad corridor resembling a large assembly-hall, off which on each hand opened the cells. At each end and in the middle of this big thoroughfare were great windows which, though painted, let in through the upper half a flood of light. In the middle of the hallway, in the recess made by a big bay-window, were two long, wooden tables. This space served as a dining-room for the twenty-seven women in the ward. Down past the rows of cells I was led. At the extreme end of the ward, leading off on the right and left, were two blind alleys. Down the one to the left we turned. Five cells opened on this narrow hallway, and into one of them I was thrust.

I examined my new quarters. They were precisely like the old except that a chair replaced the stool. But I soon discovered that the new cell was more depressing, for the outlook from my door was cut off by the gray plaster wall just

across the three-foot hall space, and I could not see as previously into the big open ward. Moreover at the entrance to the alleyway I noticed a large wooden door many inches thick, looking like the entrance to some great castle, which, when closed, shut off this wing from the main corridor. I fervently prayed it was never pushed to. I had been brought here without Elizabeth, and I hoped against hope she would follow soon and be placed near. Standing at my door, I heard sounds in a near-by cell. Pressed close against the bars, I whispered, "Hello!" In a moment back came an answer. Listening intently, I heard:

"I don't dast talk; I 'm just up from punishment."

But my curiosity was great and my loneliness greater, and I persisted:

"What were you punished for?"

There was a little chuckle, a negro's chuckle, then came the reply:

"Well, child, I sassed the matron. I was all right until I was bad; I don't know why I done it. I just could n't help it, and I up and called the matron a ——."

Is one only a lady when treated like one? Cer-

tain it is that my colored friend's statement filled me with joy. I wanted to pat her on the back for her courage. My one regret was that this graphic language had not been addressed to our old dragon. Presently I ventured again:

"How were you punished?" and softly came the answer:

"Put in the cooler."

"But what is the cooler?"

"A dark cell in the basement where you only gits bread and water. I was there five days."

Evidently expressive language is an expensive luxury.

At this point there was the sound of many footsteps in the adjoining ward. The girls were returning to their cells for the night. Soon my neighbor was taken out and put elsewhere. Vainly I waited for Elizabeth. Supper was served or, rather, tea was passed. Bread had already been left in our rooms. To my joy, I was given a small can of milk by the doctor's order. I had told him I could not eat. It was good he had come to my rescue, for I was finding a diet of bread and water wholly inadequate.

The nightly supply of water was passed from cell to cell by a very tall colored woman who

measured at least six feet. I soon discovered that her cell was next to mine. She and I were the sole occupants of what might be termed the servants' quarters of the main ward. I tried to reconcile myself to Elizabeth's absence, but I grew uneasy. The one redeeming feature was the new matron. She was a good-looking, middle-aged woman, vastly more human than our old dragon. She treated us like a bunch of children, and laid down the law with a mighty hand. But her voice, though dictatorial, was not harsh. Freed from a system which demanded that all prisoners be treated indiscriminately as the vile drainage of society, she might have blossomed into an effective person. She stopped at my door long enough to give directions, and said if I did not talk and behaved, there would be no trouble. Then she departed, and, to my despair, closed the massive door. My colored friend and I were alone in our fortress.

There was still light outside. It could not have been more than five. Time in prison is an uncertain quantity. It has to be guessed by the occurrence of daily events. What should I do until morning? The fourteen long hours to breakfast seemed monumental. Should I go to

bed? But I could not sleep all that time. However, I was cold, my cell had no heat, and there was nothing to do. From the next cell came the sound of splashing, and I knew my neighbor was preparing for the night. I had just gotten under the covers when, hearing whispers, I hurried to the door.

"Say, what 's your name?" came the voice.

"Maggie Martin. What 's yours?"

"Minerva. I don't dast to talk now, but when the night-watch is on I 'll come to you."

"Come to me? How can you come to me?"

"I mean I 'll come to the door and talk."

"Before you go," I pleaded, "tell me one thing. Do you know where my friend Lizzie is?"

"The other new girl? She is in a transom like this on the other side of the ward."

Here conversation ceased, but at least I knew Elizabeth's whereabouts. I crept back to bed. It had grown dark. I turned on the light. I had been told to leave it on, as all lights are switched off at nine. If I put it out earlier, I would have to get up in the night and turn back the button so that in the morning, when the electricity was switched on, again it would not

flare out and waken me. It was a poor little light, wholly inadequate for reading; but, then, I had nothing to read. However, I had no desire for darkness, for the isolation of the place was gruesome. I lay staring at the electric bulb and pondered. Suppose there was a fire, or Minerva was taken sick or attempted suicide. What could I do? No sound would penetrate that wooden door. I imagined the scurrying for keys and the time needed to unlock the ward door, then the wooden portal, and last the barred door of the cell. It would be much too complicated in a sudden fire. No one would bother with us.

It was very depressing. I tossed on my bed. Would nine o'clock never come? Thank goodness for Minerva! Far from fearing her as one of those vicious colored criminals whom I had been warned against, her companionship was the one ray of comfort. At last, when it seemed as though it might be midnight, the hall door was flung open, and the gray-haired night matron, with jangling of keys, came trudging down the alley. Never was sound so welcome. Having assured herself that we were alive, she hastened on. To my joy, she left our castle entrance open. I learned from Minerva that she did this to save

trips down our way, and that it was safer to talk with the door open, for the footsteps gave warning of danger. When the door was closed, and she opened it noiselessly, transgressors were inevitably caught.

Minerva, true to her word, now undertook to comfort me. We exchanged ages and crimes and dwelt on the horror of prison. Then Minerva, feeling further conversation undesirable without greater knowledge, began a series of questions prefaced by a statement:

"I 'm a sportin' lady; are you?"

"No," said I, meekly.

"Are you married or single?"

"Single."

"Do you write to your mother?"

"Yes."

"All right, kid; don't you worry."

So concluded the catechism. Then I tried to draw Minerva out, but failed. My fate was sealed. Having skilfully placed me, and finding I was not of the streets, but an innocent thing from home, I was not to be polluted by bad stories; rather, I was to be protected. Conversation languished. Minerva ordered me back to my bed. Soon we had settled down, but not to

sleep. All night I heard Minerva sighing and groaning. She had confessed to the morphine habit. I wondered whether she suffered greatly. Sleep for me seemed impossible. Prison had begun to grow in on me. I could no longer take things lightly. The hopelessness, the dreariness, the ugliness of the life preyed upon me. But if I could not sleep, neither could many of the others. Faintly from the ward came coughs and groans all night long. Only when the jangling of keys and the hourly rounds began did the sounds cease. If mankind had been able to uncover that building and see into the minds and hearts of those convicts, what a sink of despair of aching and bleeding hearts, cursing their God and their fellow-men, would have lain exposed!

At the first peep of dawn on Thursday I was stirring. I ached with fatigue from a night of unrest on the hard, uneven bed. It was chilly, a cold November day, and there was no heat in the big stone building. Yet I longed for fresh air, and climbing to the window-ledge and pulling myself to the small, open space at the top, I drank in the morning freshness. I yearned for sight of the blue sky and tried to scratch the paint

from the window; but it was useless. The paint was on the other side of the glass. Then I searched for a peep-hole, and finding a paintless spot the size of a glove-button, I placed my eye at this. My reward was a glimpse of the yard and high stone wall. Discouraged, I jumped down, and struggled through a sponge bath in my scant quart wash-basin. In the hot, perspiring summer days this daily dash of water must have been tantalizing. As I was finishing my toilet, I heard the steps of the day matron. She paused at our blind alley, and then in commanding tones came the order:

"Maggie, stick your arm out." I hurried to my door, vainly speculating on what was expected. Then came further instructions: "Stick your arm through the bars so I see it. You must do this every morning when you hear me." So that was the way she ascertained whether I was dead or alive without the trouble of examining. Presently we were ordered out into the ward corridor, and formed in line. My eye caught Elizabeth's, but gave no sign of recognition. We had already learned one of the many unwritten prison rules, which is that any form of greeting between inmates is considered immoral,

evidence of what is termed "lady love," and promptly punished.

In grim silence we filed to the table in the alcove. I noticed with interest that Elizabeth was seated between two powerful colored women. Elizabeth comes from the South, and has race prejudices. Will these survive, or will she lose all race consciousness, as I have with Minerva, and feel only a sense of companionship, the kinship of a common cause?

In tense silence we ate. Breakfast is literally shoveled down, for the time allowed is the shortest possible. I could eat nothing. It was the same unpalatable stew and coffee, and the onslaught of the hungry women disgusted me. Yet as I stole glances at my companions, I noticed the neat hair and the clean hands even when those hands were worn with toil, and I was aware that the lack of table manners was chiefly due to want of time and pressing hunger. The hunger theory was soon verified, for when we were back in our cells and the matron had gone to her breakfast, Minerva whispered:

"Say, Maggie, if you don't eat, give it to me." I eagerly promised.

Again we had been left in our cells with noth-

ing to do. At about eight, nearly an hour later, we were released, and again formed in line. Always there was the same grim silence. Minerva was tallest, and led us. Next to her came "Lizzie," while I was well toward the middle. Slowly we marched down-stairs and into the workshop, where, with hands folded, we sat at long tables. For five or ten minutes we sat thus, abject and patient, then a bell rang, and we were told to put on rubbers and capes. Somehow the luxury of rubbers seemed incongruous, in view of the many hardships, yet perhaps because they were a luxury the women took pride in their possession. Now we filed out into the prison yard clad in our little black capes, which came scarcely below the waists of our clumsy white wrappers. Upon our heads we wore a knitted woolen head-piece called by some strange freak of absurdity a "fascinator." We resembled a group of dejected little orphans suddenly grown old as round and round the yard we marched.

It was with a great sense of rejoicing that I felt the fresh morning air in my face and saw the blue sky overhead. I quickened my step, and I noticed that Minerva, with head erect, was

striding forward with the power and freedom of some Greek goddess. I saw Elizabeth's arms begin to swing in rhythm with her body, but only for a moment; for an ever-watchful matron's eye was upon her, and she was directed to fold arms, walk in the middle of the path, and stop jerking.

Under this dreary régime the joy of exercise vanished as round and round we went in rigid order and forlorn silence. On three sides rose the red brick walls of the building, while on the fourth was the stone wall shutting out the world. The path ran round a struggling grass-plot over which hung the clothes-lines. It was all sordid and ugly. The spirit grew weary. By the time the fourteenth round was reached, one would give a kingdom to turn about face and walk in the opposite direction.

At last the half-hour was up, and we were ordered back to the shop. I promptly attempted to sit next to Lizzie, but that was not permitted. Part of prison discipline is to separate friends, and I was placed at the extreme other end of the work-table. I saw with pleasure that Minerva sat just opposite Elizabeth. Our task was hemming heavy, red blankets. At another long

table women were picking cotton. The dust from this rose, and filled the room, causing great discomfort and coughing. A few women were making mattresses, and there were some hand sewing-machines and three old foot looms. This was the extent of the industrial equipment.

There were fifty of us in the workroom, with three matrons keeping guard. They sat at high desks, glaring and silent, ready to scold or to punish if hand flagged or eye wandered. There was a big clock, and I watched the minutes drag by. But release came long before expected. At ten o'clock Ward VII was ordered back to their cells. I rose, and followed my companions. What was to happen? No less momentous event than the weekly bath. All work stopped; a morning was sacrificed to this task when, morning and night, prison life abounded in idle hours. Locked in our cells, we were brought forth one at a time, and scrubbed by the colored convict trusty in the presence of the matron. Each individual bath takes only a few minutes, and then the dreary hours to dinner-time must be spent in lonely idleness. The whole prison life is a hotbed of such gross mismanagement.

The system is based on stupidity and ignorance. If half the common sense devoted to business were expended on prisons, the physical, if not the spiritual, aspect of these institutions would be transformed in a day. As it is, hundreds of working people are given into the State's care, and are taught nothing, produce nothing, are ill housed and ill fed, and their time and that of the guards or keepers is wasted. The result is an organization which manufactures criminals, and is maintained at great cost to the State. I begged off from a bath on the score that I had had one the day before, when changing wards. The rapid immersion of one person after another, in the same tub, with no proper facility for cleansing, did not seem hygienic or sanitary. Once a week, along with the bath orgy, clean underwear is furnished, and from these the newcomer must rip off the name of the last wearer, replacing it with her own.

I had finished labeling my garments with "*Maggie 933*" when I heard the matron ask Lizzie to sew labels on the dirty wash rugs of the cells, that they might be sent to the laundry. But Lizzie was busy with her clothes, and I darted forward to claim the privilege. For it

was a privilege to sit in the open ward with something to do, even though the dirty rugs were nasty to handle. Even so small a diversion as this is precious, and I found that others, like myself, were eager for such duties. Keen rivalry existed for the privilege of scrubbing the floor.

At a quarter of twelve we had lunch in the alcove. There was the same speedy despatch of the same pasty stew. Then came an hour in the cells, and at one another dismal half-hour's march in the yard. At one-thirty we sat silently over our tasks. I made various experiments. First I sewed fast and then slow; sometimes I hemmed well and then ill. But all brought no comment, as long as one's fingers were busy and eyes to the front. To work faithfully for a State that ill-treats and ignores one is no satisfaction. Nor is the cent and a half a day that one rarely receives an incentive. The total of this large wage for a year is five dollars, but as a fine of fifty cents a day for each day of punishment is imposed, it is seldom a prisoner has any funds on release, even after a long term. Car-fare and the ten dollars furnished by the State are usually the capital with which the ex-convict

must face the world, with small chances of securing employment.

So we stitch, stitch, stitch, and sigh, sigh, sigh, and do as little as we can, and move our feet silently, but restlessly. Visitors come, and we steal glances from under half-closed lids. We dare not look up, though we fain would see these well-dressed and happy human beings. The bent head and the downcast eye encountered by the prison visitor are due not to shame, but to fear — fear that a smile or a glance will be punished. The average convict is as completely cut off from communication with mankind as though he were buried six feet underground. His one letter a month to the outer world is inspected and he dare make no complaint. His one visitor a month must be seen in the presence of a guard or keeper, and he dares tell of none of the prison miseries. The few brave souls who have spoken have frequently suffered torture from keeper or guard. It is a cruel thing to give one man unlimited power over another whom we have rendered helpless. It is like giving a cat a mouse to play with. Human beings cannot wield supreme control without degenerating into tyrants.

But at last it was four-thirty, and the one event of the day was at hand. For ten minutes the barrier of silence was broken, and intercourse was permitted. But even these precious minutes were robbed of their joy, for a matron, with ear alert, listened to every word, and the friend with whom one would talk was placed at a distance. I longed to know how Elizabeth felt. Her face was white and drawn. Did she want to leave? But if I could not inquire, I had at least bested the authorities by sending a secret message through Minerva, who now sat next her. In a stolen conversation with Minerva I begged her to ask Lizzie how she was, and whether she thought we would be called out as witnesses on Friday or Saturday? The fiction that we were to return to the city as witnesses in a case had been decided on as the best way to avert suspicion when we made a sudden departure. I saw Minerva and Lizzie in earnest conversation, and I knew I should have my answer that night.

I turned to my companions, but they were as sleepers suddenly awakened, and utterance came slowly. To be commanded to talk, and to know that in a few short moments you would be

stopped, makes speech halting and awkward. There is so much to say, and so little time. I noticed opposite me a round-faced, good-looking, good-natured young Irish girl, and I tried to draw her out. This was her first experience of prison life, as her young, carefree face showed. She had only a few more weeks to serve, and was counting the days till her release. She gave me some scraps of history of some of the others, but the matron was straining every nerve to hear, and we grew silent. We had hardly begun before a bell rang, and the moments of respite were over.

That evening I could not even eat my bread; it seemed to have acquired a prison odor. However, it was not wasted, for all uneaten bread was gathered up and reserved for the next meal, a splendid method of transmitting disease. I had not yet had my message from Elizabeth, but that must wait until the night-watch made whispering safe. To-day more than ever the horror of prison life had laid hold of me. My endurance was at an end. I decided not to wait for my message, but to seek relief at once. As the matron left for the night I asked permission to write to the warden. To my consternation, my

request was denied, and I was told that notes could be written only in the workshop in the morning. Then indeed I was a true prisoner; no power I could exert would release me before morning. To tell the matron I was a prison commissioner would be foolish. She would merely think me crazy, and clap me forthwith into the cooler as in need of restraint.

To be so utterly helpless was keenly disturbing. It required all the will I possessed not to make some desperate move for liberty. But visions of the punishment cells rose to confront me. My fear was great, and I did nothing. Vainly I tried to calm myself. I trudged up and down my room, and every second my need of freedom increased. Now that I knew there was no escape, imprisonment was not to be borne; my nerve was giving away. This would never do. Long before nine and the opening of the wooden portal, I was whispering to Minerva, and she told me that Lizzie thought we should be called out as witnesses on Friday, and I realized that Elizabeth, like myself, had had all she could stand. I invented excuses to keep Minerva talking, so much I dreaded solitude; but she was fearful, and begged for caution.

Sleep had become impossible. I went to bed only to jump up again and pace back and forth and cling to my bars. I began to have the horrible sensation that I had been trapped, that my prison adventure was a scheme to lock me up for life. I imagined my friends so busy with their affairs that they had forgotten and forsaken me. I foresaw that the prison authorities would accept no explanations. I should merely be considered another criminal gone "dippy" or "bughouse," as prisoners call it when they lose mental control.

I pulled myself together with a start; I realized that I was on the verge of a breakdown. If ordinary prison life could have this effect, it was lucky I had not sought punishment in the cooler. The tales of its horrors rushed to my mind. I saw and felt the dark, windowless cell in the basement, which contained naught but a bag of straw. Into this damp, isolated dungeon the quivering, despairing human being is thrust, and when the victim grows hysterical, there is a canvas straight-jacket, in which she is strapped and left to lie on the floor, and then in the dark watches of the night, horror of horror, mice and rats issue from their hiding to play about the

prostrate body. Little shudders ran up and down my spine.

I was glad my light still burned and that occasionally I could hear Minerva cough; but at nine the lights went out. Would the night never end? I imagined I heard groans. The girls in the ward over the punishment cells said they frequently heard cries. I must not give way, and with sternness I set my mind to the task of controlling my body.

An hour or so had slipped by when I was suddenly waked from a nap by groans that were not imaginary. It was Minerva. There could be no doubt. In increasing anguish, her distress mounted and sobs broke from her. I was at my door, but what could I do? I whispered, but she did not hear. I thought of shouting, but to what purpose, when no one could hear save helpless creatures like myself? Would the night matron never come?

Minute after minute dragged by, and the sounds in the next room as of a caged animal in torture continued. Sick at heart and faint, I clung to my bars. At last came those ponderous, solid steps. Would the matron hear? Surely she could not help doing so, the cries were so loud.

She paused at the alleyway to listen. Then out into the darkness, in hard, cold tones, came the question:

"What 's the matter?"

Between long-drawn sobs came the answer:

"Such pain, such cramps!"

Breathlessly I waited for the unlocking of doors and speedy assistance, but again in short, curt words this church-going, benighted female flung back an order:

"Rub it, and keep still."

Despite past brutality, even I had not expected such cruelty, and Minerva was suffering too keenly to obey. The gasping moans continued. Finally a light was turned on, and Minerva was inspected. Then the heavy steps moved off and presently they returned. This time evidently with some remedy that brought relief, for after a while the sounds of distress grew fainter and ceased. So the night wore on, bringing with it no rest.

I no longer cared whether I made a success of my prison investigation or not. I had one consuming desire, to get out. I mechanically went through the morning task of dressing and eating, my whole being centered on the note to the

warden. The workroom was hardly reached before I made my request. This time it was not denied, and with a prayer of thankfulness I saw the sealed note sent on its way.

My heart grew lighter again; I could observe those about me. Visitors came to the door, and daringly I reached for another blanket and turned my head for a glimpse of them. They had scarcely departed, under the guidance of a smiling young matron, when the officer who acts as industrial instructor turned upon me. Pitilessly, in the presence of the fifty other women, she derided and upbraided me for boldness and indecency. Her strident, masculine tones fell like blows. I shrank from her fierceness, and I saw in the demeanor of my companions indignant protest and a longing to rush to my rescue, but it all passed over me like water over a duck's back; for as I looked from the window I saw coming down the prison yard the warden's secretary. My heart leaped in wild exultation. At last my deliverance was at hand.

A few minutes later we were sent for to go to the office. The eyes of all were upon us as Lizzie and I went eagerly forth. The fiction that we were needed as witnesses was carried out, and we

were told to hurry, that we might catch the noon train for the city. We were led to the clothes-room, and our possessions were returned to us. We found some of our things badly damaged as a result of the cleaning and fumigating that they had undergone. Several articles were missing. Elizabeth's stockings were not to be found. But such trifles were insignificant. Somewhere outside was the blue sky and great open spaces and fresh air, and our clothes were flung on anyhow and pieced out, where lacking, with the prison supply. The two matrons who presided at our dressing to make sure we carried out no concealed notes had become almost human. Under the spell of our approaching freedom they talked in friendly manner, and gave copious advice, chief of which is, "Take a fool's advice, and never get in again." Our assertions that we "*never will*" were vehement and forceful.

As we walked down the long hall leading to the entrance, my arm slipped through Elizabeth's, and I gave it an ecstatic squeeze; but though release was only a yard away, this unseemly behavior was not to be tolerated.

"Girls, girls, that won't do!" came the warning. "Let go of each other!"

Must all the beauty and sweetness of love and friendship be crushed in prison for fear that beneath it may lurk something evil? But only for a moment was our ardor damped, for just beyond the iron gate was the great green, fresh world.

With thumping hearts we emerged into the street; silently and timidly we moved toward the station, for a matron was with us, and our hour for speech had not yet arrived. In perplexity we pondered how to make our escape. Would this woman insist on seeing us on the train? This would be disastrous, for we had planned to seek refuge in the home of our former host. Fortunately, the train was late, and having safely landed us on a bench in the station, the matron made her departure. With furtive glances, like true ex-convicts, we watched the matron's movements, and as she left by one door, with stealthy caution we made for another, and hailed a taxi. Safely within, the flood-gates burst open, and the pent-up speech of days poured forth. We were two pallid and wobbly-looking objects who climbed up our host's door-steps.

Two or three days later, before the news of our imprisonment had been made public, Eliza-

beth and I went back to the prison. We felt it was due the women that they should know our purpose in becoming prisoners, and not be led to believe we had been spying. As Elizabeth and I journeyed back through the long corridors to Ward VII, it was queer how the old prison feeling returned. The matrons were much disconcerted at the disclosure of our identity. The old dragon slunk off without daring to look at us. We stood at the end of Ward VII while the girls formed in line, and then hand in hand Elizabeth and I stepped forward. At first there was no sign of recognition, but I smiled, waved my hand at Minerva, and said: "It 's Maggie and Lizzie come back to you. Don't you know us?" There were smiles and starts and exclamations of astonishment. Then I told the women who we were, and assured them that our whole object in becoming prisoners was to help them; that I hoped we might succeed, that our hearts were with them and always would be, and they could rest assured that anything said in confidence would be guarded as sacred. All this time I watched Minerva's face. At first it was grave and serious, but at my last sentence it became wreathed in smiles. Then we all shook hands

and talked. But the women hardly knew how to be friendly; it was too sudden a breakdown of the relentless prison barriers. As we left, one woman grasped our hands, to utter with passionate fervor, "You 're brave women."

MAGGIE MARTIN'S FRIENDS

IT was a crisp, clear winter's day. The fire crackled brightly on the hearth, the steam sizzled in the radiator, an expanse of blue sky and dazzling sunshine shone through the big windows. It was all so warm, so vital, so bright!

With sinking heart I opened the letter bearing the prison postmark. It brought back too vividly the prison cell. My voluntary week in prison had cut deep. I closed my eyes and felt again that cold and barren cell, with dirty, yellow walls, iron bars, and gloomy painted window through which no patch of sky or flash of sunshine ever came. I remembered the passionate longing for a glimpse of the world, a smell of fresh air.

What had my experiment accomplished except to leave me with an ugly memory? Had any impression been made on the prison department? Or was it like so many Government organizations

so busy existing it had no time to inquire what it was doing? Then my eye fell on the following sentence:

The paint has been taken off the windows, and we can talk in the shop.

A queer, glad rush of feeling seized me as I realized that there was one official who was human.

With eagerness I tore open the remaining letters. Every sentence bore evidence of a new and humane prison system. But woven in with the glad tidings was disturbing information: the matrons and keepers, guardians of the old order, were rebelling at the new.

We are talking now, and the paint is off the windows, but we pay dearly for this. The head matron says she thinks it ridiculous. We are accused of using language that is of the lowest. We are promised the talking will soon stop.

Or this:

One of the girls asked for paper to write you and said you were a friend to her and the rest of us. The matron said, "How dare you?" And then they put her on bread and water in her room. She is a long-timer. The matrons are mad because we can talk, and pick on us all the time.

The new freedom was not to be won without suffering, but so it is with all progress. The advocates of the old system fight desperately each step of the new way. They fear each reform as a personal menace. It was hard to be patient during the next few weeks. My own experience made me understand the intolerable indignities and petty tyrannies that can be practised by stupid people with limitless power. Everything was done to nullify the reforms of the official with the kindly heart.

As my correspondence grew, the women I had met casually in prison came to be distinct personalities. There was Mary, the young colored girl who scrubbed me so vigorously when I served as a convict. She proved to be a jolly, light-hearted, irresponsible young woman. In her bubbled the spirit of youth, ever eager for a good time. A child of nature, with no power of control, she was always in trouble. But to suppress Mary was as futile as suppressing the sunshine. She was every one's friend, the defender of the downtrodden, for whose sins she was punished. Her first letter was pitiful.

I am locked in my room and only leave it to empty my bucket and a few minutes' walk in the morning.

MAGGIE MARTIN'S FRIENDS

Two women and I were sewing on a bed in the shop. One was kidding me. I don't know what was said, but some one laughed. The officer reported us. We were put on bread and water and locked in our rooms.

I asked five matrons if they knew what I was punished for. No one seemed to know. The Head Matron would not come to see me or send me any word. My temper got the best of me and I destroyed my table, chair, and window. I guess I was crazy for the time. You see, I had just talked to the Warden, and my time was nearly up, and he had promised to try to get me out if I was good.

I have been locked in this room nearly five months. There is no light at night, and there is a wire screen over the window, so I cannot open it to get the air, and I am not allowed with the other women.

It seems as though being put in a strait-jacket and kept on bread and water for seven days was punishment enough. The first time I was locked in seven months, the second four months, and this time it is over five months.

This made sixteen months in the seven years of Mary's imprisonment that had been spent in solitary confinement. Small wonder if occasionally her temper got the best of her. Her boundless energy needed outlet in work. Her uncontrolled nature could only gain balance through service. The way to reach Mary was through her gay and generous heart. Her crime against society was the theft of two dollars. Not ordinary theft. For plain pick-pocketing the punishment would

have been trivial: but one night Mary with two other girls was out for a lark. As they left a saloon they met two men and stopped to chat. Presently one of the men missed two dollars. Then arose an outcry. Mary's companions ran and she was caught. No money was found on her but she was convicted. The sentence was from seven to nine years for two dollars; for if a woman takes money from a man in the night-time, when he has sought her for illegal purposes, it is grand larceny. The law gives to strong men special protection.

In contrast to Mary's wild gaiety was the patient meekness of little Christine. She is twenty-three, and was sent to prison when nineteen. I remember well the first time I saw her; even the prison cell looked big in contrast to her little figure. As she crept close to the bars, her head scarcely came to my shoulder. She had small, shy features and small, shy ways. Her golden hair was pulled straight back. Her blue eyes were expressionless.

I spoke of the little son born in prison. With a dart she was at her table, taking from it her one treasure, a picture of a radiant, laughing child. As she handed it to me, her small face was trans-

figured; no longer expressionless, it was alight with love. For the moment time, place, and self were quite forgotten. But it was only for an instant. Then a look of patient hopelessness hid the mother love.—It was six months since she had seen her baby. For two years he had been in a children's asylum. I tried to get her story, but she spoke only broken English. I asked her to write. When her letter came and the Polish was translated, this is what I read:

It is already nearly four years since I am locked up, and there is no one to help me in my misfortune.

At the time of the arrest I was too young, and permitted myself to be misled, and I am very terribly sorry; but it is too late.

There where I worked I met the man for whom I am now suffering and paying the penalty. He promised to marry me. My friends were long married, but he told me that his promise he'd keep; but I was not to tell any one. I believed all the time that he was telling the truth. I had nearly $100, for which I worked so hard. He knew that I had the money, and said I must give it to him and all that was owed to me for work. He said there was one pocket.

I did not think that he was deceiving me to my shame, and I gave him all the money. Then I got suspicious, and after two years asked him, "Why don't you marry me?" I told him I could n't stand this kind of thing any more. When I reproached him he said he knew

nothing about it. He denied all he said before. He could do as he pleased. Nobody could force him. He would marry anybody he chose. He said, "America is a free country, and I can do as I please."

By those words I was so overwhelmed from grief, regret, and shame that I took his life.

I beg you, dear madam, very much to translate this letter and explain what the reason was, when on trial I did not speak, said nothing, because I was ashamed. Therefore I was condemned with my child to be imprisoned for ten to fifteen years.

With this letter in my hand and the memory of the mother love in the little face, it was difficult to believe that society would wish to treat Christine as a criminal.

Prison is as full of diverse personalities as the outside world. It is populated by the meek, the gay, the talented, and the ignorant. No special shape of head or hand marks the convict. But we are beginning to learn that many prisoners have unusual personalities. It is as if they possessed a personality bigger than they could control, an inner, seething force that from childhood had been misdirected. To this class of vivid and striking personality belonged Harriet. Her generous, passionate nature came into conflict with the well-regulated laws of society. She was the

Russian Jewess who the day I was bertilloned had attracted my attention by her bitter grief at the shame of being pictured and catalogued as a criminal. She is small and well built, with shapely hands and feet, black hair and large dark eyes. She has needed intensely, lived intensely, and had little. Her untrained will has not been strong enough to curb her desires. Life for her was a series of glowing possibilities. Eager to satisfy her mind, she became mistress of several languages, a student of law, and a reader of Shakspere and Dante. Equally eager to satisfy her body, she wanted fine clothes, gay little suppers, and the luxuries of taxis. Added to this was a generous nature which never refused aid. The result for a working-woman spelt ruin. For several years she worked as a private secretary and drew a good salary. But books and clothes and untold loans to friends could not be so met. Soon the outstanding debts were great, and a check was forged.

This was Harriet's second offense. On the first occasion the disgrace seemed too great to be borne. Coolly and calmly she had weighed the alternatives of imprisonment or death. Deliberately and without haste she had climbed

into a seven-story window and hurled herself out. A few minutes later she was sitting on the ground, bruised and shaken, with a cut that was to leave a scar, but otherwise unhurt.

Then followed two years of imprisonment, which did not cure, and Harriet went back to society to continue as before. When the second disaster came, a well-known woman pleaded for her. The woman agreed to shelter Harriet, and give her a salary that she might pay back little by little the amount of the forged check. It was evident that only in some such way would Harriet learn control. But the court was adamant and exacted its pound of flesh. Harriet was sent to prison for four years. What will she be at the end of that time?

Another woman whose letters began to pile high on my desk and whose story haunted me was Rose. It was the heart of a wife that cried out. Her whole life was dedicated to her man and her two little boys. At seventeen, with a conviction borne of certainty that she had found her mate, Rose fled to him. For ten years, through sickness and poverty and the birth of two children, they had struggled on together, with an ever-increasing love. But Rose was an outcast, for

The attractive exterior of Auburn prison

this man of her heart had not married her. He could not; he was already married. This was the story she wrote:

I met him and loved him dearly, but three years before, one night while drinking, he married. He never saw the girl but that once. I made my mistake when I went with him, but I thought we could save together for a divorce. But when we had $70 saved I fainted at my work, and was told I would be a mother in three months. I didn't know before; I was only seventeen. My sister came to live with me, and was taken ill and sent to the hospital. Next month Ed was in the hospital with typhoid. I never missed going to see them every day, though I expected my babe in four weeks. Two days after my husband came home (he is my husband to me) I went to Sloane Maternity at 11 P. M. My babe was born at 2 A. M. We started to save again, but every time we had $25 or $30 it was sickness and no work.

Ed only earned $12 a week. I worked in a Y. W. C. A., then I worked in a bakery taking crackers off hot pans until my fingers were burnt to the bone, but it was $5 a week. It may seem funny that in 9 years we could n't save enough for a divorce but there were two children, my own operation, and Ed's sickness.

After my second boy came I got in trouble. I did sewing home for a few I knew, and when I was offered things in pay for my work I took them, even though I suspected how they was got. For I wanted to sell them and get money. We had a chance to go as caretakers of a big country place, and I wanted to go there married.

But I was arrested for receiving stolen goods. Some

one wrote to the court that I was n't married, and they showed me no mercy. I was bad for living with a man. Yet I know girls who are married and have children, yet they drink and go out with men.

I love my darling so much I would give my life for him. Do you think I am bad for saying this?

I tried to quiet the restlessness Rose's letters created, telling myself that this woman was a convict and probably lying. But I got no peace, and I went out in search of the facts. It was easy to find Ed. He came at once in response to my call, a fine, upstanding young man, well-dressed, well-mannered, and attractive. Behind him tagged two small boys, shy and clean and wearing kid gloves, a testimonial of the father's supreme effort to educate them as gentlemen. This would-be husband and father was still deeply in love. It was true his faith had been shaken. He had thought Rose a divinity, and he found her only human. Besides, since Rose's imprisonment, there had been no letter. In prison a husband must be duly certified to make letter-writing permissible. In all the long weeks Rose had been allowed no word from her little sons or been able to send one. This I explained, and all the man's passionate love returned.

From the husband I went to the lawyer who tried the case. He was sure Rose was all right; that it was a case of taking things to keep the house attractive and to hold the man upon whom she had no legal claim. Then there were Rose's people and the family clergyman, all of whom were confident of Rose's innate goodness.

It was all very puzzling. The world in its unthinking, heedless fashion was spreading disaster. It was ruthlessly tearing a man and woman apart, leaving two children homeless, nameless, and illegitimate, while the man was sent back to a woman of the streets. It could not go on. Rose would go insane. She was sobbing her heart out in the prison hospital. My entrance into prison had brought a brief diversion, but in the excitement of discovering who I was she had unwisely passed a note. This brought punishment. She wrote:

I have been kept in punishment for 20 days. I came out of the hospital the day you came to prison and you can picture a sick woman in the cold cell you had for 20 days. The bucket had no cover and was emptied only once in 24 hours. I nearly died. My body is starving. I can't keep anything on my stomach, and my very soul is starved for my darlings and a kind word. I am all alone in that

wing off the main ward. I fear my mind will leave me. I am in shop now, but I walk my floor all night.

Such suffering was unendurable.

I remembered the official with the kindly heart who had let in a flood of sunshine through unpainted windows, and I made an appeal.

Some days later there came an official letter. In it was a note from Rose directed to the official which explains itself.

Dear sir:

I want to thank you for the first night's sleep and the happiest day I have had since I came to prison. When I received my husband's two letters I forgot I was behind prison bars. Accept my thanks and my sincerest wishes for a Happy New Year.

Little by little the convicts grew to be real personalities. I longed to go to them. Then one fine morning came the news that there was a new head matron, and I should be welcomed.

In twenty-four hours I stood at the prison gate, bag in hand. With beating heart I rang the bell. The gate keeper with his great key ceremoniously unlocked the clanking gate. A wicked delight possessed me at my power to open and close that barred door at will, where before I had been hustled and bustled about. In a moment I was

greeting the jolly-faced, smiling, new matron. Her amiability hid for days the fact that nowhere beneath the soft surface was there a backbone.

With cordiality the freedom of the place was accorded me. As I stepped into the big, barren hall, a group of convicts filed past. So deep was the prison experience that reality vanished. Again I was a convict. A helplessness seized me; instinctively I turned to fall into line. Even the matron at my elbow felt the pull, for she addressed me as "Miss Maggie." Then I saw this was not the prison of a few weeks before. Instead of sullen, expressionless faces, there were smiles, waving hands, and turning heads as the convicts flashed out their welcome. The despotic and relentless discipline had been broken; humanness had crept in. How queer is the solidarity engendered by common misery and a common cause! Never before had I felt so bound to any group of people. We had a gay reunion. We met freely, without keepers or guards, to discuss prison problems. And always the suggestions for reform came to the same end — the need for self-expression instead of utter annihilation. This human need for self-expression, love and

companionship is wilfully ignored in all prisons. Hysterical, defective or insane is the verdict as the barred door of the punishment cell slams to on some sobbing woman. Yet can any one be normal whose aching hungry heart and passionate longings are condemned to weeks, months and years of suppression? Like a purifying fire was the return to normal relations, the give and take of friendship, the opportunity to serve others.

As the result of our meetings a league was organized. This league was to be the prisoners' mouthpiece. The head matron agreed to accord it the same hearing as that given to matrons and keepers. Through the league the prisoners hoped to show they were to be trusted, and little by little win some degree of self-government.

The new organization was called "The Daily Endeavor League." The representatives, one for each ward, and the president were chosen by the prisoners. The color emblem was a blue bow, proudly worn on each dress front. There was nothing exclusive about this organization, for all might be members. Only in case of abuse was a prisoner to be suspended; but even then a

period of good behavior made reinstatement possible.

It was a serious and earnest group that met in chapel to take the oath of allegiance. Gravely we signed the document that was to us a charter of enfranchisement. For the first time in history prison reform was to come from within.

What a melting pot prison is. It struck me anew as I felt the hand-shake of those 114 women. There was the toil-worn misshapen hand of the scrubwoman and Harriet's delicate, shapely one. The vigorous warm grip of some sturdy colored girl and Christine's shy pressure. Russian and Irish, colored and Italian scrubwoman and prostitute bound together by a common misery, now joyfully working together for a common cause. Solemnly each woman left the chapel and filed back to her cell and a deep hush of peace fell upon the prison. Will there some day be such peace over all the earth?

My prison visit had come to an end, and I returned to the city. But day by day my mail grew in interest. Letters were no longer confined to tales of personal woe; life had grown bigger than that. Not personal needs, but how to improve conditions, was the chief topic.

Rose and Harriet were made representatives of their wards, and, still more wonderful, Mary, released from months of punishment, was the best representative of all. Under her guidance her ward which held the most difficult cases became a model. Her unfailing tact soothed ruffled tempers and brought peace out of discord.

Harriet was not so successful. She exacted too much. The president wrote:

> Harriet's trouble is overzealousness. She is so thoroughly in earnest that she fails to realize that others cannot grasp her ideas and break away as readily from little habits as she can. Overzealousness will hinder as much as lack of interest. But we must be patient.

As for Rose, her responsibilities transformed her. Tears were suppressed, and she became a normal human being. She turned her pent-up emotion into service. For centuries men have worked shoulder to shoulder for a common end. Women have not had such training. It was daring to expect that this group of extreme individualists could bury personal miseries and consecrate themselves to the general welfare, but the daring was justified. A reign of good behavior descended upon the prison. The punishment

cells stood empty. Hysterics ceased, and grudges were forgotten.

The first reform the league sought was a release from the cells on Sunday.

The interminable solitary hours from Saturday night to Monday morning had been a great hardship. Now Sunday afternoon the women were allowed to mingle together freely for an hour.

The league president wrote:

> I want you to learn what a good time we had. While we have enjoyed numerous little privileges, to-day is the first we had our Sunday afternoon recreation hour. I know it will give you much pleasure to hear that the women behaved exceptionally fine and drew forth very favorable comments from the officers in charge. It was a grand success, and I am very happy to-night, for the girls are falling in line as we hoped.

Perhaps to lighten the seriousness that descended on prison life, the new head matron decided to give a valentine party. It was a kindly thought, yet I almost regretted it; for it was important there should be nothing in the nature of a bribe for good conduct. The lesson humanity needs to learn is that life's value lies not in what we can get, but in what we can give.

Therein is the secret of all reform. However, this burst of gaiety brought such happiness I could only rejoice as I read the following:

I know you want to hear about the dance on St. Valentine's day. To say we had a delightful time is but putting it mildly. You have no doubt experienced the feeling every girl does when preparing for her first dance. You know what a fever of excitement and expectancy there is. Well, so it was with the "girls" here. Such "fixing-up" and borrowing of plumage you never saw. The ball opened at 4 and ended at 9 P. M.

I can picture former employees of the institution throwing up their hands in consternation at the "inmates of a prison" keeping such unearthly hours.

But real progress is not made without struggle. Such harmony did not continue. Black specks appeared on the horizon, which rapidly grew into ugly clouds. The former hostility of the matrons was renewed. If the good behavior of the convicts continued, fewer keepers would be needed. The staff might be cut in half. Tales were pouring into the head matron's ears of plots and counter-plots until her smiling exterior was a ruffled surface. Who were right, the convicts or the keepers? Doubtingly she listened, and ended by giving allegiance to the matrons.

Meantime little by little the prisoners' letters showed the drift of affairs. They struggled loyally to be true to the new head matron, but doubt entered. It crept out in such sentences:

The new head matron is kind and good, but she will never be able to reform conditions until the majority of the old matrons are removed.

There must be the spirit of kindness in the officers to reach the good that exists in the heart of the prisoner. The officers bitterly resent the league. They hate to lose the power they had and abused.

But ignorant hostility was not the only obstacle. The whole system was wrong. The head matron made no change in the wretched prison diet and the work remained a farce. Day after day the women hemmed blankets and boiled food in vats, while the prison circular announced the inmates were learning to sew and to cook.

Sunshine had crept behind the gray walls. The punishment cells stood empty. These facts were glorious, but something else was needed, if prison was not to become a place to mark time in futile and wasteful. One woman's entire five-year term had been spent scrubbing one floor. What would she do when released? Continue to scrub or fill the monotony of her empty life with

wild gaiety? An expert stenographer was washing clothes in the laundry. Every day roughened hands and swollen joints made return to her trade less possible. Surely society for its own sake did n't wish to cripple the people it locked behind bars and make them unfit for any life but that of the street and crime.

Brooding upon these things, I seized pad and pencil and worked out a wonderful industrial program. Then I again returned to prison. The head matron greeted me kindly, and consented to let me try my plans. But she was not sympathetic. A benevolent despotism had supplanted a despotic tyranny. That for her was sufficient. Again we met in chapel. It was late afternoon. The sunshine flickered through the barred windows. The ugly room, with its dirty, pinkish walls, its yellow, wooden benches and cheap carpet, jarred the senses. Then the sun sank, and a warm, red glow softened this discordant background and mellowed the women's faces. A hush fell on the 114 convicts as they sat there quietly without keeper or guard. All the rigidity of bearing that comes from iron discipline had vanished. Here a hand was carelessly resting on a bench back or a shoulder drooped or a body

was bent forward in eager intentness. Simplicity, humanness, and intelligence shone in the eager faces. The mask of impenetrable sullenness had been torn aside. Suddenly, as I faced this vibrant, awakened audience, my plans crumbled. What godlike qualities did I possess that would enable me with wisdom to map out in smallest detail the lives of these women? Like accusing fingers on the white paper before me flared out my elaborately worked-out prison schedule, with its hours for sewing, its hours for cooking, its hours for recreation.

There flashed upon me the picture of myself as a voluntary prisoner. I felt again the crushing hopelessness of those strips of cold iron as my body pressed against them, and the insane desire to break out and demand a hearing, to insist on being treated as a human being. That was the key-note — the need of being treated as a human being, not as a cog, a dirty cog in a machine. If an effective program was to be wrought, it must be made in conjunction with those women whose lives it vitally concerned. They must be given not only work but the development that comes from work.

Throwing aside my position as prison commis-

sioner and becoming again Maggie Martin, 933, I jumped down from the platform. In disjointed, halting sentences I said I came not as a director, but to put upon them the burden of evolving a prison program. As I proceeded joy and self-respect crept into many faces. The response was tremendous. From all parts of the room rose the buzz and hum of discussion. Bodies straightened, shoulders were squared, as the women faced this new and wonderful thing demanded. With disconcerting intelligence that put my machine-like plans to shame, they went straight for the vital issues, leaving for later the minor details. With infinite wisdom the first matter discussed was: "Shall all be treated alike?"

On one side of the chapel, occupying the first few rows of benches, sat the "old-timers," the second and third offenders, those who had previous records. On the sleeves of these was branded the mark of shame. A red or blue disk and white stripes showed the number of previous imprisonments. The system herded them together as incorrigible. All that was hardest in prison life fell to their lot. They lived in the cold, damp cells in the basement, where sunshine never came.

They were the victims of rheumatism. By day they worked in the moist, steaming laundry, and at night slept in damp, cold cells. This patient, dejected little group was now all alive to know the verdict of their companions. Particularly did their eyes seek the faces of another group on the other side of the chapel. These were the "trusties," the official favorites. They had the better and easier tasks and occupied a sunlit ward. All day their cells were flooded with sunshine. There were plants in the unpainted windows. There were pillow-shams on their beds and tablecloths on the tables, for theirs was the show ward.

I waited results. In the outside world we are too proud of superiority to desire equality of treatment. But the crushing shame of iron bars binds prisoners together in a real sisterhood. "One ain't better than another," was the general verdict. "Because you 're a second-timer don't mean you 're bad. Most likely it means that, being a jail-bird, the world did n't give you a show, and you had to go back to crime or the streets to live."

So they reasoned. The vote was unanimous. Every prisoner, regardless of creed, color, or

previous prison record was to be given the "same chance." Listening, it seemed imperative that the women have the opportunity to live up to this ideal. Temporarily I had the power. My mind seized on a plan. Probably it was against all tradition and any moment a higher authority might intervene, but this was the time for *deeds*, not for fears. Waving my hand at the two groups, I said:

"If you 're in earnest, why not change places? For months the old-timers have had the worst of prison and the trusties the best."

It was a daring suggestion. A hush fell on the chapel, but only for a second; then swiftly, with mighty tumult, the applause shook the building. With one accord every woman arose to the occasion, swept on and up by the ideal demanded.

Such enthusiasm needed action. I called the two groups to come forward. I suggested they pack their belongings and effect a transfer of rooms at once. Gaily they departed, some forty or fifty women in all, without keeper or guard. Quietly they went on their mission to pack their odd treasures. Prison possessions are few, and soon they were returning. The first to appear

was a former "trusty," now destined to be a martyr. A great straw hat given to her when working in the prison yard, decorated with a gaudy ribbon, was perched on the side of her head. In her arms was a soap box, with her few possessions, post-cards, a stray book or two. Her pallid face, with its soft, quivering, childish mouth, was wreathed in smiles. Like a veteran returning from the war, she was greeted with wild enthusiasm. One by one they came straggling back, Harriet almost sorrowful that she was to gain by the transfer, and Christine serenely content with her opportunity for service. All were quiet and orderly, but every face was radiant; heads were carried proudly. It was good to be trusted, and to prove worthy of trust.

When all had reassembled, they set out for their new wards. In a few moments each had chosen a cell and returned to chapel. Thirty minutes was the time consumed in the transfer of nearly fifty women to different cells. Ordinarily, such a readjustment would have been a day's work, each prisoner solemnly escorted by keeper or guard.

Thus is the State money wasted on unnecessary guards and the convict deprived of the freedom

of action and responsibility that alone builds and strengthens character. A little deed, this changing of wards, yet the spirit in which it was done had opened a new world and given every woman a glimpse of greatness. We had been lifted out of ourselves by a true democracy and a real unselfishness. To those of us who had experienced that radiant vision of big things, it would never quite vanish.

As I left the chapel, it was difficult to walk sedately. I wanted to run and shout and tell the whole world of the innate goodness in all human beings. But at the foot of the stairs I met the keepers. Their glum, scowling faces flashed upon me like a blow in the face. They had been kept a half hour overtime. I tried to explain our meeting and the wonder of it. To them it was nonsense; they were not interested. Their task was to see that prisoners did not escape. They were not paid to reform convicts. I offered to do their work and lock every cell, but this was against the rule. I hesitate to criticize these women. Probably wisdom and nobility are not to be had for board and $30 a month; but more than new buildings and elaborate equip-

ment, prisons need fine people, possessed of common sense and human understanding.

The first department we attempted to transform was the kitchen. I really did nothing. I only secured for the women the opportunity to talk, to plan, and to work. Upon the convict cooks was put the responsibility of furnishing eatable food and teaching the art of cooking. Many times I had stood in the kitchen doorway and seen gloomy, sour looks, and pans of unappetizing food sent to hungry convicts. Grim silence prevailed, while vast chunks of food were tossed into vats and steamed into unpalatable masses; for punishment food, not wholesome food, was the objective. Occasionally an order was given, and mechanically the prisoners obeyed. Life here, as elsewhere in the prison, was mere existence.

But now all was bustle and activity. Seven convict teacher cooks, with seven convict pupils, had been chosen to serve in the kitchen. Long and eager were the discussions, and untiring the efforts. There was one kitchen stove. To boil things in vats was easy; anything else meant hours of labor.

When dinner was served that day a little sigh of contentment ran around the tables as each prisoner gazed at her plate. Instead of the boiled and tasteless mass of codfish and potatoes, there were slices of fried fish and a baked potato, the regular Friday food, transformed by a labor of love.

It is curious what a small thing it takes to awaken a feeling of good-fellowship. Eye met eye with a new light. This deed of the convict cooks had stirred the desire in all to contribute like service. It was a tired but happy group of kitchen women that went to bed that night. A new dignity had come with responsibility and new interest in work.

But this wonderful promise of big things was crushed. The new program demanded hard labor. The convicts uttered no word of complaint at long hours and discomforts incidental to all readjustment, but the matrons rebelled. They could no longer idly watch the prisoners, move them about from spot to spot, and lock and unlock them at given hours.

One day a colored convict became violent. She was gradually going insane. She pulled an iron slat from her bed and threatened to kill

whomever approached. Panic spread among the officers. As if the whole prison had gone mad, they seemed to imagine the only safe course was to lock every one up. Yet the world had not changed. Little Christine was as meek as before. The league members as industrious as ever. A few days later the insane woman was sent to Matteawan, and the panic subsided. But matters grew steadily worse. Readjustments were made to suit the matrons, and favors conferred on certain girls. The program of equality and hard work was undermined. Even the league was receiving its death-blow. In joint debate the women had suspended a member for unworthy conduct. She was put on probation. Instantly the girl was befriended by the keepers, and the league ridiculed. This put a premium on bad conduct. Sick at heart, I went away. Not many days later I learned that the head matron had made herself the league's president, and that the representatives had been directed to report misbehaviors to her and the officers. Self-government with the officials in command was a farce. The women must not be left in such a predicament, and I returned, this time to disband the league. The head matron immediately with-

drew from the presidency, but it was futile to proceed when we had neither the comprehension nor backing of those in charge.

It was a grief-stricken multitude that met in chapel. I feared a riot. The league had grown dear to every heart, but the vote to disband was unanimous. An organization whose representatives must report to officers and become stool-pigeons and tattlers could not be tolerated. I was determined there should be no secrecy about the cause of the league's disbandment. Openly we would announce our decision. As I made my brief statement, I saw the joy go out of 114 faces. The women sat in huddled, discouraged groups, muttering together. I seemed to be killing the thing that I loved. But the fight was not over. Angered at being held responsible for the league's failure, two matrons rose to do battle. In shrill voices they denounced the women as traitors, yet called upon the convicts to testify for my benefit as to their loyalty and kindness. It was a queer scene, those in official positions seeking vindication from others whom they held to be the scum of the earth. As I looked into those convict faces, flushed with struggling emotion, I wondered if any one would have the courage publicly

to face that official world and state the truth. One word against an officer, and that prisoner may be harried and worried like an animal in a cage. Yet I waited, hoping against hope, for that courage which defies the world.

Then half-way down the chapel I saw Harriet slowly rising, white to the lips, but steady. Respectfully the words came:

"You really have n't been good to us. You did n't like the league and made fun of it." She got no further, for her mates, thrilled by such dauntless courage, rose to her call. Like shots from a cannon, burst out the mighty applause.

And now from the other side of the room another girl had risen, but I dared not let matters go on. My position as commissioner placed me falsely on the side of the officials; I adjourned the meeting.

So we failed. The big dreams we had dreamed did not come true. Perhaps I had expected too much. Perhaps I ought to have been content that Rose could write Ed and her boys, and Christine see her small son twice a month.

But except for these flashes of individual happiness the mass struggle blindly on as before, beating time until their day of release. In no

department is real training being given. When the women are released, frequently they come to me. Their pitiful helplessness is only too apparent. One woman begged me to meet her at the Grand Central Depot. The noise and glare of the city after the long years of seclusion terrified her. She clung to me like a frightened child. When we passed a policeman her whole being quivered and shrank and marked her a convict. I got her a room in a boarding house until she could get employment. When I handed her the latch she was paralyzed. The strain of locking and unlocking a door for her who had been locked in for many years was nerve-racking. She stayed in her room to avoid it. It was days before her awkward fingers readjusted themselves to pots and pans, and kitchen utensils, her former implements of trade. It is cruel to move prisoners about like pawns on a chess-board and send them back to society robbed of initiative. It is as heartless as carrying a little child and then thrusting it into the crowded street to walk alone.

Some day the thing I have dreamed must come true. Prison will be transformed, changed from a prison to a home. At its head will be a wise,

intelligent mother, able to distinguish between the daughter who would be a militant and the one who would be a Jane Austen, treating each according to her needs. In place of the mattress-making, the women will manufacture the wrappers and female garments now made by men at Sing Sing. The smell of real food will issue from the kitchen. All will be bustle, cheer, and activity. And best of all, the women will be moving about their tasks without keepers or guards, learning self-control through self-government, living a life such as she will be asked to live when she returns to the world outside. Only when such a day dawns can we equip convicts to face a doubting and hostile world and prove their integrity.

PART II

BEHIND REFORMATORY WALLS

INTRODUCTION

It was while engaged in work for the Children's Court that I discovered most reformatories don't reform. Visits to institutions were never satisfactory. I couldn't get the children to talk freely. I felt they were suppressed and afraid.

Then came the idea of consulting convicts who had been institutional children about life in reformatories. It would be difficult to win the prisoners' confidence but hidden in each heart is the spirit of service. If I could stir this feeling and make the convict realize that he might save children from a fate like his own, he would lay bare his heart.

With this in mind, I went to Sing Sing prison, and interviewed "Happy Jack." His story is told in the succeeding pages. The information he gave me made me sure I had found the way to secure real knowledge. Then I spent my voluntary week in prison, and realized as never before the horror of life behind the bars. I knew the helplessness of adults caught in the clutch of prison authorities, wielding limitless power.

INTRODUCTION

It was appalling to think what might be happening to the locked-in boy or girl. They had no power of redress, no way to voice their suffering. I determined to go to other convicts as I had to Happy Jack, and appeal for further information and assistance. As a lawyer I should have been mistrusted, as a social reformer doubted, but as "Maggie Martin, 933," a fellow convict, every prisoner extended his hand.

Through the kindness of Mr. Thomas Mott Osborne, Sing Sing and Auburn prisons were thrown open to me. I went first to Auburn. It was one Sunday morning, I spoke to the men. They filed into chapel, 1,500 in number without keeper or guard, and sat with upturned expectant faces. My own heart was heavy. The papers were full of the account of tens of thousands of men slain on the field of battle. Love in the world seemed dead. Yet as I looked at those faces, scarred and torn with emotions, I read tenderness and human understanding. Suddenly I knew what to say: "Let us fight to save, not to kill. Strong men are needed. My woman's heart has seen the vision but I need your strong arms for the fight. Help me save little children. Tell me what is wrong with reforma-

tories. What has crushed and broken your lives? Alone I am helpless, with your aid everything is possible. Will you fight the good fight?"

"Comrade, I give you my hand, I give you my love more precious than money. I give you myself before preaching or law. Will you give me yourself? Will you come travel with me? Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?"

Somehow they caught my vision, felt all the things I left unsaid. The Divine spark in each answered the call. Without a word, swept by a simultaneous and common impulse, they arose and stood in hushed silence. Not a sound, not a hand clap, but as I walked between the long line of men, out from the chapel, each chin was set firmly, shoulders squared, and eyes moist with emotion. Plainly on every face was written the promise, "Henceforth we are fighters, but we fight not to kill, but to *save.*"

That is why I know the stories told of reformatory life are true. The response in Sing Sing was the same. Yet the world has not lived through my experiences. It doubts the records gathered from convicts. For the doubters, let me state that I verified many records. In all,

INTRODUCTION

I collected about 1,700 records and 200 stories. Fifty cases taken haphazard I verified. Under his different aliases I looked up a man's record in the numerous reformatories and prisons in which he had been confined. In each instance the statements made were correct, the only discrepancy being a variation of a few days in date. A study of the records thus gathered disclosed the fact that two-thirds of the men confined in prison had as children been in some sort of juvenile institution.

The pitifulness of the stories told made plain why so many reformatories do not reform. Physically, mentally and morally, children in institutions were being abused. When not abused the spirit was neglected. There was no love. During the past generation, man's strength has been largely directed to material achievements. But there are equally thrilling and bewildering revelations to be made in the human spirit. To speak the word that opens the human heart and makes the bent and twisted man burst his bonds and stand forth in all the glory of manhood; or makes the tiny child blossom like a flower, are discoveries requiring great men and women. Neither the law nor scientific methods

of reform can touch the spirit. In prison and out, the way to remake the world is to release the bit of God in each heart.

Sparta, New Jersey.
July 3rd, 1916.

WHY CAN'T A KID WRITE TO HIS MOTHER?

I WAS talking with a convict. We were discussing reformatories. Suddenly his eyes flashed and he said, "No one, unless he has gone through what I have, can realize how wrong it is to send a child to a reform institution. I was sent to the reformatory at the age of nine for taking coal from the railroad to keep my mother and four small children warm. Up to that time I had never stolen or used bad language. I was an innocent child. But when I came out seven years later, I was a full-fledged young devil. There are officers in that institution not fit to herd swine. I think if it were n't for children's reformatories, one prison would be sufficient to keep all the prisoners of this state."

This statement set me thinking. On all sides were stories of boys and girls made worse by a term in a children's institution. Visits to various reformatories shed little light. Rows of

children sitting in school, or shop, or marching silently to meals tell nothing. The superintendents of the institutions dilated on what was good, never on what was evil. How could I get at the defects? How find out what was wrong in the system? It brought me back to the convict. The men who had been hurt by a term in a reformatory were the ones to consult. I determined to talk with them, and secured permission to interview the inmates of Sing Sing and Auburn prisons. I found that two-thirds of the prisoners had been in reformatories as children. They were bitter in their hatred of these places. All denounced them as crime-breeders.

They were eager to save the children of to-day from a fate like their own. Gladly they gave records and stories which demonstrated the rottenness of many so-called "reformatories." Fifteen hundred prepared written statements. With unfailing trust, they gave aliases and disclosed facts unknown to the police. A convict serving a short term as a first offender would lay bare four or five previous arrests under other names. Many of these cases I verified. In every instance the statements made were correct. It became apparent that the majority of convicts are

Wouldn't you like to be a foster mother to one of these ?

reform-school graduates. As a child progresses from grammar to high school, from high school to college, and from college to university, so delinquent children graduate from one penal institution to another.

Besides giving records, one hundred and fifty men wrote the stories of their childhood, in a reformatory. These tales show why it is that reformatories don't reform. One rule that exists in nearly every institution is that a child shall not write to his mother more than once a month and not then if naughty. Such a rule is intolerable. Ninety times out of a hundred the best influence in a child's life is his mother. He confides in her, he goes to her for advice, and for the touch of her hand when ill or hurt. When sent away he has the hand of man against him and no mother to help.

This is one man's story. He is a prisoner in Auburn — twenty-two years old. He was first arrested when thirteen, and most of his life since then has been spent behind prison bars. He has still the dancing blue eyes and curly brown hair of a mischievous youngster. There is something clean, strong and energetic about him. He was the kind of boy who smashed windows, played

ball in the street, and was always getting into trouble. He was full of boisterous red-blooded vigor and youth. Even ten years of prison have not killed the sparkle and life. There is still a ready smile and gay laughter on his lips. He must have been the joy of his mother's heart — a curly-headed, fighting man-child, always getting into trouble and always going to her for help. This is what he writes:

My dear Miss Doty:

You ask me the reason I'm in prison to-day, and I tell you straight: it was because I was sent to a reformatory when thirteen and could n't have the good influences of a mother. I could n't even write to her, and naturally when released I had gained a tendency to become "illegitimate." I am only twenty-two, but I 'm a fine example of a graduate from one of the lowest to one of the highest institutions. In 1906 when thirteen I was sent to the reformatory, and when I left there after two years I was a first class "mobbusler" and "prowler." I was n't out a year before I was sent to Elmira for burglary. After serving twenty-two months I was released on parole, but within four months I broke parole and was sent to the reformatory at Napanoch. I came out of there in October, 1912, and in January, 1913, was arrested and sent to Sing Sing and then to Auburn, where I am now. I have n't been out of prison more than a few months since I was thirteen.

As a boy I was wild, but not wicked, and I did love my mother. When sent away I was very lonely. You can

only write one letter a month in a reform school and not then if you've been bad. I wanted to tell mother things, but I couldn't. I made up my mind to write and hide the letters in my shirt and send them out by some feller when he got discharged. It was against the rules. But it can't be wrong for a boy to write his mother.

The reformatory was awful. It couldn't make any one good. I was sent there because I threw a stone and hit a man. It was wicked to throw stones, but I didn't mean to hit any one. I used to see the man with the cut in his head and the blood coming. It frightened me at nights, and I wanted my mother. I wanted to ask if the man was well again. We slept in a great, dreary dormitory, packed close with beds, a hundred boys in one room. There were bars at the windows. In winter it was terribly cold. There weren't any mattresses, only blankets on the beds. Often I couldn't sleep. You have to lie just so in bed and mustn't put your hands under the covers. If a kid falls asleep and his covers come off in the night, the watchman, instead of pulling the covers over a boy, gives him a crack with a rattan. It wakes the poor kid in an awful fright.

They beat the children dreadfully. There was a little Jew boy, and he didn't want to go to church because he was a Jew. He was hit on the head, and the ear-drum broke. I felt awfully sorry and gathered the little Jew boy up off the floor and put him to bed. For my humane act of picking up an unconscious boy from the floor I received a "berrie" (stripped, put under a cold shower, and beaten). If I could have written my mother, she would have done something, but letters home are read, so you can't tell anything; besides I had been bad for helping the Jew kid, so I couldn't write at all.

After a while I got hard and did n't care. I tried not to think of my mother. Once eight kids and I planned to make a get-away. When we had the door open, seven got out, and then I and another feller started to follow, but we were grabbed by the throat and knocked down, and were taken down to the cellar and there given a "berrie" that was a peach. The seven other kids was caught in two weeks, and we was all given another "berrie." While the kids were away, I and the other boy was beaten up every day.

The day you interviewed me you asked why is it boys in reformatories learn so little. It 's because the men in charge of the school are foreigners and speak only broken English, or else have n't any education, so how can any one learn anything?

In institutions they don't believe in teaching you, they try to beat it into you with "benders." I know you will agree that boys will be boys, but if a boy in a reformatory plays a joke on another, he is beaten up for it, and has to stand in the yard for five or six days. You said the day you visited ——— reformatory there were only two boys in the hospital and you wondered why because there were 1500 children in the place. I will explain the reason, for I was in the hospital for a month, and I know. Nobody will complain of being sick. The boys are supposed to go to the hospital to be treated. I have seen kids between nine and twelve have their teeth pulled out, and instead of giving them a mouth wash to rinse and clean the mouth and throat, the man in charge (he was n't a Dr.) would take a toothpick, put a piece of cotton on the end, saturate it with iodine, and stick it on the raw, bleeding gum. I have had iodine put on a knife-cut instead of having it sticked. Also I had an abscess on my back, and for six

days I had nothing but iodine put on it until one day the Dr. came and rushed me to the hospital and lanced it. I still bear the scar. For everything that was the matter, you was painted with iodine. We used to call the man in charge of the Dr.'s office the "iodine kid."

I have seen children have their necks and faces dressed when they had running sores or ulcers, and a bandage would be wrapped about their necks and left until it got so filthy it had to be removed.

One day a kid came in from the yard with a broken nose. He was about thirteen, and because he would n't tell a lie and say some other kid hit him, he was given twenty raps on the hands. Next day, before going back in the yard, he said he had his nose broken playing ball, but they would n't believe him. It is the same thing day after day. Nobody believes you, and you get beaten for everything. Can you blame the kids for not wanting to complain when they are ill? There was two Italian boys, big fellers about sixteen, who used to bathe in the same tank with us. They were suffering from a blood and skin disease. They went to the Dr.'s room, but the "iodine kid" put them out. The scalp of one of these boys was one big scab. Some kid told the Dr. about it, and he had it taken care of. I don't know what became of the other feller. This was not the only case of suffering. I know a boy who was sent to the hospital, and in four days he was dead of hasty consumption. He was practically dead when he was sent to the hospital. I don't know if the Dr. is to blame or not. There was n't any trained nurse. The boy was n't given eggs and milk, though he asked for them. The Dr. ordered them, but the kid never got them. I know all this because I was in the hospital waiting to be operated on for my abscess.

After I had been in the reformatory a long while, I decided to try to get away again. I fixed it so four kids could slip out, but they got caught. They got a "berrie" and was asked how they managed to escape. One said, "The kid showed us how easy it was," so then the man in charge of the yard sent for me and asked me what I meant. I told him, "America is a free country, and you are allowed to express an opinion." But he didn't agree and gave me a "berrie" and stood me in the yard every day for a month.

As you see, I kept getting worse. I grew reckless and didn't care what I did. I lost all touch with my mother. I was always naughty and couldn't write her, and she was too far away to come to see me. I was never able to send out letters to her on the sly and after a while I tore up those I had written and hid in my shirt. She grew to think I was wicked and didn't love her, but it wasn't so.

There are many other bad things in a reformatory, but they are so awful, to be frank, I don't know how to express them on paper, or any other way. The ridiculous and severe punishments meted out for little offenses is shameful. One punishment is standing in the aisle by the side of the bed. When the lights go out, the kid is told to kneel. He has to remain on his knees in one position sometimes for hours. This is torture to a child, whose mind is filled with fear that if he moves the punishment will be increased. It breaks the child's spirit, and it is worse than the prison cooler (dark cell). Instead of using reformative and constructive methods, the kid is humiliated and humbled until he becomes a sniffling weakling. The kid that shows spirit and courage is marked for experimental purposes. One of the most vicious punishments is putting a kid under a cold shower

and beating him with a rattan. In the dead of winter I have seen a kid put under a cold shower and kept there till he fainted.

I have undergone every kind of punishment myself. When I went to the reformatory, I was mischievous, but I had a kindly nature. I never thought of doing violence to any one. But after a few months in the place I can truthfully say at times I had the inclination to commit murder. The whole atmosphere of that reformatory is the same as that of a state's prison except for the cells. It does not inspire confidence in a kid. Elmira is as bad as any of them. You go there, and when you come out you are ready for state's prison because of what you have learned. How can any one keep good when he never comes in contact with anything good? My mother was my one connection with good people. When I was cut off from her, my only friends were my pals in reformatories and prisons. Naturally when I went out I went with them. I knew no one else, had nowhere else to go. The day I got out of Elmira I was met by a pal. As soon as we got to New York, we commenced drinking. That night we planned a burglary for the following week. It was the only trade we knew. Next morning I tried to borrow my fare to Chicago. I wanted to get away and start anew. But I drank, could n't get the money, and gave up all idea of changing my mode of life. I committed two burglaries in the two following weeks, and here I am.

I hope this is the kind of information you are looking for. I hope it helps the kids. If the reformatories were decent the prisons would n't be half full. Let the kids write to their mothers. Let them keep in touch with one good influence in the outside world. Let them write her

unopened letters, then they can tell her when things go wrong. If you want anything else, let me know. You can call on me any time. Don't forget it.

D—— J——

This was D. J.'s story. Marvelous that in spite of it his eyes still sparkle and laughter is on his lips! Many will say it is a convict's story and therefore not true. But there are hundreds of others like it. I for one, believe D. J. Here is another letter, shorter, but equally to the point:

My dear Miss Doty:

It is impossible to express my feelings on paper in regard to the punishment I received at the ——— reformatory. However, it may give you some idea when I say that ever since that time whenever I see any officers of that institution it is like waving a red rag at a bull. I have a scar on my cheek which I shall always carry as a reminder. I have received brutal beatings by the police and others since that day, but have no ill will toward any but the officer at the ——— reformatory who nearly killed me. He has since died. At his funeral I learned there was a grand ceremony, orations, etc., the priest stating he was going to heaven. Well! if there is a God, and that man goes to heaven, may I be sent to hell. I was committed to the reformatory by my parents because I remained out late at night. Up to then I had not committed any serious offense, but after my release I practiced some of the ideas I learned at the reformatory, but was never a success. As a result I have spent more than half my life behind prison bars.

Tough but interesting

WHY CAN'T A KID WRITE?

I was only allowed to write my mother once a month, and every letter was inspected. My mother came to see me while at the reformatory, but when she was there the party who inflicted punishment stood alongside, and when my mother asked me who cut my cheek, I was in such fear of him I stated I fell running across the yard. I did not tell the truth until I arrived home.

My dear Miss Doty, the first prayer I have said in a great many years was the night at Sing Sing after listening to your speech. I returned to my cell and uttered a short prayer for your success. It may not have been a classic, but if there is the God they claim there is, I believe He will enter that in His book in your favor, as it came from my heart and was wholly sincere. Although my record is bad, down in my heart I know I am not.

I trust you may forgive me for rambling off the way I have, but whenever I speak of those days, it upsets me, and I am hardly rational. If I could make you and the public feel as I do, believe me, there would be a revolution in regard to children's institutions all over the country.

Wishing you every success, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

D—— C——.

Suppose these men have exaggerated. Is that a reason for not letting a child write his mother? Evil flourishes behind closed doors. Foul air is cleansed by fresh, germs are destroyed by sunshine, hidden sores relieved by opening. Why not let the outside world into the reformatories? Good institutions will not object, and

the bad ones will be purified. No matter how good an institution there is always a weak link. The child should be protected against that link. Unless children can write unopened letters, they have no protection. It is barbarous that the griefs of a child's heart, the woes and injustices, can be told to no one. If childish imaginations occasionally paint pictures that are not true, what matter? D. J.'s story consists of facts. Whether the little Jew boy's ear-drum was broken, whether sick children are properly cared for, whether barbarous punishments exist, are matters that can be ascertained by inquiry. If the stories are false, the mother can be reassured, the child corrected, and no harm is done; if they are true, the quicker the mother, and every mother, and all society knows, the better.

Every night thousands of little children in institutions go lonely to bed. There is no good-night kiss, no touch of a loving hand, no one who understands. But the little heart would be greatly cheered if it knew that with daylight a private, uninspected letter to mother might be dropped in the post-box on the big, iron gate. Some might not write, but to all, good and bad, come moments when the soul cries out, moments

when confession is on the lips, hope and aspiration in the heart; and then a child needs his mother.

Such a reform could be brought about in a day if the women of the United States willed it. No institution can withstand the demands of the mothers. Let the women see to it that the children's institutions in her city or state permit free communication between mother and child. Why can't a kid write to his mother?

BEHIND THE WALLS

A FEW weeks ago a gray-haired mother came to me. She was a working woman. Her hands were work worn, tears were in her eyes. She smoothed the creases in her skirt nervously as she told her story. Her boy was in a reformatory. She wanted my assistance. "Help me get him out," she kept repeating. "Help me get him out. He needs me and can't have me. I 'm allowed but one visit a month. He 's only fourteen and he 's growing hard. He 's suffered for what he did. Each visit he asks will God forgive him. The man he shot haunts him. He deserves punishment for playing with a pistol — he and I know that — but he did n't mean any harm. They chased him and he got scared. He fired; never looked where he fired and hit a strange man. When he seen what he done, he stopped running. He flung himself on the ground and sobbed and screamed until the police took him. For nights after he sobbed himself

to sleep. But now he 's growing hard. Last visiting day his looks frightened me. He 'd brushed his hair down to his eyes. He looked sullen and ugly. At home he wears his hair straight back. Then he has a sweet face. I says, ' Oh, son, don't wear your hair like that,' and he answered gruffly, ' I can't help it, Mother. It don't do to look good. They get after you. You 've got to look hard here to live.' "

The gray-haired woman paused pathetically, then added: " That reform school ain't doing him any good. If I saw him oftener maybe I could fill his heart with love. In his last letter, he says ' Please come soon. I 'll wear my hair the way you like it.' "

As the little mother looked at me over her letter, suddenly the memory of another mother and son clutched my heart. The memory of a son who also adored his mother, and was good to look at, and who had been sent from her. At the age of nine he was committed to the institution where the gray-haired mother's son now is. He spent ten years within those grim walls. He was not released. To-day, as a man, he is in State's Prison.

Fear seized me. Understandingly I grasped

the gray-haired mother's hand as she rose to go. "I 'll do my best," I promised.

This is the other boy's story, the boy imprisoned throughout boyhood. I met him in the State Prison at Auburn. His eyes first attracted me. Though a man, he has child's eyes. Beneath the shell of manhood is visible a shy, sensitive, affectionate boy, a mother's boy, a dreamer, a thinker, a boy with moral courage but no physique. His eyes are honest but timid, the beautiful eyes of a startled fawn. In their depth lurks suffering. He has seen things that ought never to be seen. A bad man, a criminal, he calls himself, but the soft brown eyes belie the statement. No man could look and speak as he does and be innately wicked. His words come from his heart. "Love," he says, "is the foundation of all good things — of truth, honesty, and beauty. I am a bad man with little chance to reform. To fill me with the love I once had and overbalance the bad, would require too much kindness."

When he was nine his father died and left his mother with seven children to support. The oldest, a girl, was fifteen, so Larry and two others were sent to a combination orphan asylum and

reformatory. At this time Larry was a good little boy. He worshiped his mother. Often he stopped his play to run and press his rosy cheek against hers. At night he crept into her arms, and on her knee, with little arms about her neck, learned to pray. It was a bitter grief to leave home. Those first weeks of separation were torture. He rarely saw his mother. On the monthly visiting day there was frequently no money for the trip or his mother had to work. If his mother could have paid $2.50 a week, he might have had a visit any time. But poor children cannot enjoy the luxury of a mother. Daily and hourly he longed for her. He wanted to tell mother the terrible things that happened. But when she came he saw her in a big visiting room with many other mothers and children and his little lips were sealed. He dared not tell what he knew. To tell meant a beating and what was worse yet,— punishment for mother. Next visiting day she would not be allowed to see him.

One night a new teacher was put in charge. The little boys hoped he would n't know the rules. They began to whisper. After interminable days of silence this was delightful. But the new teacher, on the alert, heard the whispers. He

did n't know who was guilty so he picked out five boys from where the sound had come. These he told to kneel. The rest he ordered to stand. You could have heard a pin drop. The five kneeling boys were commanded to hold out their hands. Ten times a hickory stick fell upon each little outstretched palm with mighty blows.

The new teacher meant to teach the class a lesson. Not content with one punishment, at periods of every half hour for four hours, he repeated the proceeding. The little hands grew red and swollen. Some boys screamed with pain. It seemed to the watching Larry as if his heart would break. He could n't sleep that night. He saw the cringing boys and heard the screams. He put his head under the covers and sobbed for mother.

The children in that institution never had a good time. There was an hour morning and afternoon for recreation in the cement courtyard. Some boys played baseball, but they had n't much spirit. Larry wanted friendship more than play. Eagerly he sought among the boys for some one he could love, some one who would understand, some one to whom he could cling.

There was one boy with a face like an angel.

BEHIND THE WALLS

He had curly red hair with which the sun was forever playing. It made a halo about the pale face. He sang in the choir. Dressed in his white surplice he seemed to Larry a real angel. Here was a boy with whom mother would like him to play. Shyly he offered friendship and the red-headed lad responded. Larry's heart grew almost glad. This new friendship was a sacred thing. He was careful never to say or do anything naughty in the presence of his friend. They had little opportunity to be together, only the recreation hour in the yard. Then they went about arm in arm. Suddenly one night they were detained after the other boys had gone to bed. The teacher jerked the children in front of him. Foul words poured from his lips. He told the little boys they were wicked, loathsome degenerates. They were always together and held hands — that showed what they were. Little Larry did n't understand. It took much plain talk before he did. Then the world suddenly turned into a hell. He wanted to go away and hide. Everything seemed dirty. If only he could talk to mother! But the teacher was not through with him. He sent the little friend away and then he stripped Larry and beat him

mercilessly with a rattan. When he grew short of breath he paused to ask if Larry would confess his wickedness. But Larry could n't. He had n't been wicked. He had n't even known such evil existed. He said so. He was told he lied. Again the rattan descended brutally. Finally from sheer fatigue the man stopped. Then he went upstairs to Larry's friend. Soon Larry heard screams. His friend was being beaten, his friend was accused of evil. For the first time in his life Larry wanted to hurt some one. He wanted to kill that teacher. Soon the little friend, sobbing and terrified, was brought downstairs. Again the terrible questions were asked. Shame, rage, and horror possessed Larry, but neither boy would lie. They were beaten until they could n't stand. Presently they were carried to bed. For hours Larry lay crying and cursing, he did n't know which. The ten-year-old boy had become a man. The night watchman making the rounds heard the sobs. He came to the child's bedside. Larry showed him the welts on his little body. The man hastened for the doctor. The doctor had a kind heart and a timid soul. He never dared right any wrongs. But he rubbed ointment on the

bruises and listened to the pitiful story. He promised to do the same for Larry's friend. But this was the end of the friendship.

What had promised to be a David and Jonathan relation was killed in its inception. The children never again dared to walk together. Moreover, they had grown self-conscious. The beauty of their love had been destroyed. Larry's heart grew hard. Prayers and mother were forgotten. Larry sought bad company. The unprincipled boys were wise. They knew how to avoid detection. They initiated Larry. One day he discovered his rough companions were planning to escape. They had secured a key to the big iron gate. It was risky but they were desperate. The punishment when caught was terrible. As luck would have it Larry and one other got away. The rest were caught.

Larry was now thirteen. He had drifted far from his mother. He was ashamed to go home. He lived with a wild gang of boys in a bad neighborhood. For the first time in his life he became a thief. He stole to live. One day one of his older brothers met him on the street and took him home. It was good to see his mother again and for a while it seemed as though Larry might

begin over. But it was only for a few days. An officer of the institution sent for him. The desperate mother tried to hide the boy. She saw he was being ruined. She sent him to an aunt and he got a position as errand boy. But in two months he was discovered and taken back to the reformatory. Again the great gate clanked behind Larry. When he was safely within the hated walls the principal took him to a bathroom and ordered him to strip. Each second the boy wished he might die. Then the rattan began its work. From head to heels great welts grew visible on the little body. Over and over Larry was asked the whereabouts of his companion. But Larry was not a stool pigeon. He refused to tell. The enraged principal beat with blind fury. Unable to endure the agony the boy screamed, "Why don't you kill me and have done with it." It was his first outward rebellion. It brought the principal to his senses. He threw the rattan away and ordered Larry to put on shirt and trousers. These garments were punishment clothes, dirty and unwashed from the last wearer. He led the boy to a cell. It was a tiny place, seven by three feet. It had four bare walls and a mattress on the floor. But Larry saw only

the occupant. It was Frank, a boy who had tried to escape and failed. His eyes were sunken and his face ashen. "Look at your companion," said the principal. "He has been here since you left. Now it is your turn. Here you stay until the other runaway is found."

He released Frank and put Larry in his place. Larry flung himself face down upon his mattress and thought and thought. It was three months since his escape. All that time Frank had been in a cell. He might be kept there a year. They would never find the other runaway. He had gone to sea. But if they killed him Larry vowed he would n't betray his companion. Hours slipped by and night came. A can of water and a piece of bread were thrust in the cell. Larry could n't eat. For four days not a morsel passed his lips. Then the kind-hearted doctor came. "If I bring you tea and cake will you never tell?" he asked. Larry swore death first. Each night the doctor came well supplied and Larry gratefully forsook his hunger strike. One night the doctor started to sit down by the boy on his mattress. Larry pushed him hastily away. "You must n't," he explained. "It 's alive, and so are my pants and shirt." He exhibited the

crawling things. Horrified, the doctor departed with some captured specimens. What happened Larry never knew. The doctor never returned. Day after day the boy lay idle; no books, no companionship,— nothing but four bare walls. After interminable weeks the headkeeper appeared. "Your mother and little sisters were here to-day. I sent them home crying. I told them you were bad and could n't be seen." Weakened and crushed though he was, Larry turned on his tormentor. "How dare you," he screamed; "is n't it enough to do what you have done without telling me this? I hate you. I hate all the world." The words had hardly left his mouth when he was seized, shaken, cuffed, and the door of the cell slammed to. Two more months went by. The boy grew ill. Then the principal appeared with coat and shoes and stockings and told Larry to dress. It was a cold November day but he was given no underwear. Then he was marched out doors and ordered to stand on the gutter (a small space at the end of the play yard). Here he stood for eight hours daily; no work, no school, no play. He was forbidden to speak and no one dared speak to him. Desperation drove out fear. Larry found a piece

of iron. He meant to pick the lock of the gate. But he was caught and back he went to the cell. There was another beating, more solitary confinement, more bread and water. One morning as he emptied his bucket a keeper broke a broom handle over his bare legs.

It was the one straw too much. Larry grasped his tin bucket and flung it at his tormentor. Between his sobs he swore he would kill that keeper, but next day a new man was put on duty. Three weeks later the boy was again released from his cell. He was now a fit subject for the infirmary. This time Larry was put back into institutional life. All hope of recovering the other runaway had been given up. So life dragged on. Each day brought new misery. But Larry had learned many tricks and often escaped punishment. He drifted far astray. His mother rarely visited him. Love had vanished from his heart.

Then came the day of release — when he was eighteen. The principal gave him ten cents and a prayer book. Outside the gate he paused, uttered a little curse, and threw the prayer book into the gutter. Five of the ten cents went for cigarettes. Then Larry set forth, but not for home. No, that tie had been too completely

broken. He felt polluted and unfit to associate with mother and sisters. He met some boys who had been inmates of the institution. They urged him to take a drink. The remaining five cents went for beer. Larry had become a desperado, a full-fledged criminal. Yet as I write the word criminal I realize it does not fit. In spite of the abuse, the brutality, the dirt through which the boy and man has been dragged, he has still the sweetness of a child. Deep within is the capacity for love, a capacity that has kept his soul alive through all ills. "I have," he says, "broken all ten commandments but one. I have not committed murder, and as God is my witness, I have never been guilty of the crime with which as a little boy I was charged. I am not a degenerate." The pathetic and still beautiful eyes testify to the truth of this statement.

Rarely had any boy greater possibilities for good. What he might have been is gleaned in his own summary of his own story. "As a child I adored my mother. She taught me to like prayer. But that institution taught me to hate it. They beat us if our lips did not move when praying. They never stopped to consider that the heart might be moving in silent prayer. We

Waiting trial — a policeman taking the court record

children came to the conclusion it was better to move the lips with curses than with prayers. I never went to church after leaving there. Even worse, I never had the heart to pray. I figured I had been made to say enough prayers to overbalance all the crimes I could ever commit during the remainder of my life.

"When I visited my mother, after my release, she said, 'Larry, are n't you ever going to church again?' I looked in her eyes to see if she meant it. Little did she know what I had been forced to think of church and prayers. She reasoned with me. She said all the happiness of the hereafter was for those who went to church.

"While she talked I could see the faces of my keepers. I asked, Would they go to heaven? She said, Yes. Then I began to laugh. She asked me what the matter was. I said if those people go to heaven there won't be much happiness in the hereafter.

"Religious teaching is a good thing. But religion must be taught through love. If it had been, my mother's love would be with me to-day. I never kissed my mother after leaving that institution. This is a hard thing for me to say, but it is only admitting the truth. I thank you from

the bottom of my heart for helping me to state what I have so long hidden. If you think I could have done so under the old prison system, you are mistaken. If Mr. Thomas Mott Osborne and you and others like you can by kindness penetrate my heart, what can you not do by kindness, with the soft and tender hearts of little children?

"I have told you everything to help you guard little children from a fate like mine. I will face any one who dares say that one word of what I have told you is false."

Larry's life cannot be lived over, but his story may save others. There is the son of the gray-haired mother. Like Larry, he is shy, sensitive, and affectionate. His mother, his mother's love, these are the things he needs. From these he is being cut off. Something must be done. There are over a thousand boys in this institution, and all are in need. Larry's story is not exceptional. A young man in Sing Sing Prison, who does n't know Larry or his story but who as a boy went to the same institution, writes as follows:

"At the age of fourteen I was arrested for looting quarter gas meters. Of course it was stealing, but I always ignored more profitable

spoils. I was sent to —— reformatory. It would be useless to attempt to describe my thoughts the first night as I laid in bed. They went back to my mother. I could not resist comparing my situation with similar ones at home. I permitted myself to indulge in the comparison, with results nothing short of appalling. My bed had scanty coverings, it was near a window, wide open. I recalled my affectionate mother coming to my bedside and inquiring: 'Are you warm enough, dear? Does the draught from the window bother you?' and when I replied that it did, 'I 'll close it up a little, Avourmen.' Well, that first night passed with a few troubled dreams, and I awoke from a sleep which I had crooned myself into, with my own boyish sobs. I had barely time enough to begin to realize where I was, when a bell banged three times. To me it seemed to toll like a funeral bell. It certainly appears to me now a prophetic knell, for I have n't had anything but funeral days since.

"Off to the bathouse we went for a cold shower. A little explanation is necessary. On the checkered gingham counterpane on our beds was sewed a number. Mine was no exception, but as I had had no time to inspect my surround-

ings, I was unconscious of that fact. While bathing, a keeper began shouting divers numbers: '2, 4, 3, 11, 18, 1, 6, 17, etc.' As he bawled each number a shivering boy left his place under a shower.

"'Seventeen! Seventeen!! Seventeen!!!' he yelled with rising inflection and increasing sonorousness, and as he continued to screech his face took on a diabolical look which I viewed with alarm. However, as he did not look in my direction, I felt I was immune. Soon there were none left under the shower but myself, and I joined the others.

"Back to the dormitory we marched and took up our places at our respective beds. Then on the blue-checkered counterpane I noticed with something akin to horror the number 'seventeen.' 'Seventeen! Seventeen!' The number rings in my memory yet. A cold sweat of apprehensive fear broke out on me as I saw the keeper approach. He roared with hate showing in every feature: 'So you're seventeen, eh?' I recall I welcomed the blow of the descending steel wire cane covered with insulated tape, and although blow after blow descended with increasing force, I preferred that to watching his

hideous, diabolical visage. The results of this initial beating were ridges and welts all over my back, neck, legs and arms, rendering them numb. I could n't even have used a spoon for my breakfast had I the least inclination for that meal. But I had n't, young and hardy as I was; the appetite of youth was missing. I learned that the keeper who had beaten me was an Indian. But I was soon to learn that that made no especial difference. Almost all the keepers soon convinced me they were equally fiendish and I have an opinion they were all Indians of the tribe of Tammany. This beating was but introductory to a series which served to create within me a determination to get even with everything and everybody. I felt I was justified in regarding a society which tolerated such an institution as my avowed enemy. My mother died before I was released. But all love and goodness had been beaten out of me. I came out infinitely worse than I went in. I had a grudge against mankind and set about getting square with the result that I have finally landed where I am — in a State's Prison."

There are a dozen more stories of this institution. They all corroborate one another, yet

none of the writers are acquainted. This similarity of statement makes a strong case. Compare the following with Larry's story.

"I spent eight years in the —— reformatory. My mother sent me there because she was unable to support me. The punishments in this place were awful. We were beaten all over with a rattan. Religion was beaten into us. I have n't been inside a church since I left that institution. Our mothers were allowed one visit a month, if we had n't been bad. The keeper in charge of the visiting-room was very genial to the parents, but woe betide the kid when visiting day was over if he made any complaint to his mother. It was a good 'trimming' for him that night.

"I entered that institution when I was young and needed a mother's love and care, and when finally released I cared nothing for love or anything else. I had been completely cut off from family ties. Does it surprise you I am a convict to-day? Push the mother's pension movement and you 'll have less convicts in future generations."

Another man says:

"My mother died while I was in —— re-

formatory. A keeper took me down and let me see her in her coffin, but I was not allowed to remain to the funeral, though one week later my time expired and I was released from the reformatory."

The stories in this article have been confined to one institution, but it is no exception. Other reformatories are equally guilty. The majority of children's institutions cut children off from home and rob them of a mother's love. The first great reform is to throw open the institutions. Let the public see what is going on. Why should we be so tender of headkeeper and officers, so anxious to protect them from criticism that we permit no inspections except by a special commission? Why should the word of officials always be accepted and that of suffering and unprotected children ignored? As one convict says: "Open your reformatories and orphan asylums to all visitors the way Thomas Mott Osborne has thrown open Sing Sing. Let the inmates talk to visitors and take them around. This is the greatest safeguard against evil administration." This convict is right, but some institutions will object. They will say it hurts discipline. But the discipline of public

schools or boarding schools is n't demoralized because visitors see and talk to the children. On the contrary, such inspection keeps up the standard. Once the spirit of openness and frankness is cultivated, mothers will not be debarred from institution doors. It is the official attitude of secrecy that cuts the child off from home. Every child should have the right to see his mother once a week. If she can't come to him why not let him go to her? Boarding school children frequently spend Sunday at home. Is there any reason why an orphan should n't visit relatives? Even a reformatory youngster should be tried out by home visits, some months before his release. If he can't spend Sunday with his people and behave, he is n't fit to be released.

A mother's visit should never be stopped because of a son's bad behavior. Then, if ever, mother love is needed. It is of vital necessity that every institutional child have a mother or an adopted mother, some one of their own to love, some one they see and write to often, some one to whom they pour out their heart. This is as important as tooth brushes, soap, or warm clothing. The human plant can't thrive without it. Would that every child had a home, but in de-

After sentence — on the way to a detention home

fault of that, institutions must no longer be run like factories. They must be humanized. This process of humanizing is essentially woman's work. If you inform a board of man trustees that the institutional plumbing is bad and the children are getting typhoid, they will change it with a will and instal the latest improvements. But they grow perplexed over a baby with a tear in its eye and run away. To nourish the heart of a child and make it blossom like a flower, is woman's secret. Love is the center of life. Because we women know this we must break through the grim man-made institutions and see that no child goes unloved or unvisited.

WANTED — A MOTHER

IT was Christmas day in the year 1902. Soft, flurry flakes fell and stuck to the window-pane. A sad, little face was pressed against the glass; a harsh iron grating obstructed the view. Tears crept down the pale cheeks. There was to be a Christmas dinner and a Christmas tree and a tiny box of candy for each boy in the big institution. But the little heart ached. If only there were some one who cared; some one to whom he belonged; some one to love. Even a tiny letter all his own; a letter with words like caresses. He could n't stand it any longer. He 'd run away. His mother had died when he was seven. He had spent four dreary, unhappy Christmases in the reform school. His father had forgotten him. If he could have written, maybe Daddy would have remembered, but for six months his monthly letter had been stopped. Little L. C. had been naughty. He was only eleven, and he was lonely and desperate. He

watched the great, white flakes, looked at the clean white world, and decided to run away. This was before L. C. had committed any crime. Thirteen years later I found him in the State prison at Auburn, New York. Ten of the thirteen years since the day he ran away had been spent in prison — fourteen Christmases out of twenty-four behind prison bars. He had been in prison in Indiana, Ohio, Kansas, California, Michigan, New Hampshire, and New York. After each imprisonment he fled to another State, assumed a new name, and when again arrested was tried as a first offender. Eight offenses and eight imprisonments, varying from thirty days to two years, is his record.

Yet in spite of it L. C. is a strong, clean-shaven, upstanding young man. He wants to travel; he wants to learn, and he wants to live. His blue eyes are clear but thoughtful, but hidden in their depths lies a tragedy.

"Did you run away that Christmas night?" I asked.

"Yes, and got caught. A kid of eleven does n't stand much chance."

"What happened then?" I inquired.

He smiled queerly and hesitated, then came

the tragic story. "It 's a serious offense to try to escape. First there was the hickory sprig until merciful unconsciousness brought relief. But that was nothing to what followed. A shackle weighing fifteen pounds was put on my right leg above the ankle. Three times daily it was inspected for signs of tampering. I wore this piece of 'jewelry' for eight months. That was considered a short time, but to-day a scar on my leg the size of a silver dollar and my stride in walking mutely testify to its effect. A boy wearing one of these things is kept on the move. I had to carry bricks from the press to the baking oven, a distance of twenty-five yards. Back and forth all day and at night during play hour I stood on the chalk line. After I had worn my 'pet' for two months, blood-poisoning set in from a sore it had worn in the leg. I was in the hospital six weeks, but the shackle was n't removed. Had I lost both legs I suppose it would have been put around an arm or my neck until the prescribed period had elapsed. When I got well I had to make up the six weeks I spent in bed."

So that was why L. C. limped. It seemed incredible, but the limp and the scar were telling

evidence. I looked at him. There was no bitterness in his eyes; instead he was looking at me eagerly. "I want," he said, "to begin life over; I 'm young — only twenty-four; I 've been studying; I am reading Blackstone in my cell every minute I can. I 've taught myself all I know. I realize that education is my only way out. I have absolutely no relatives — no one to help me. I 've got to fight it out alone. They say Mr. Ford gives men a chance; I 'm going there when I get out, but I 'd like to keep in touch with you and tell you how I get on."

Then came long letters from L. C. Soon his whole story was unfolded; in its unfolding he made shrewd comments. He had no use for reform schools and their methods. He wrote: "The systems in all reformatories fall short of their purpose, reformation. They try to reform by disciplinary training, which means conforming to a set of rules and regulations. A boy who has committed theft is sent to a reform school and given a set of rules to abide by. I concede that certain rules must be enforced, for proper government in any organization, but it does n't follow that a boy of six to fifteen years of age can reform himself morally by complying with a

set of rules, such as: 'Thou shalt not talk or laugh, except during the evening hour on the playground.' Such rules hurt both man and boy mentally, morally, and physically. I have served under nine different set of rules and I have yet to find one that if abided by for twenty years would solve any one's life problem. The rule against talking made us sneaky. We learned to talk with our fingers.

"The punishments for breaking rules in the first reformatory were as follows: 1. A number of blows on the bare back with either a water soaked hickory sprig or an oiled, soaked strap. When this method was used the victim was held by all 'fours' to avoid 'accidents.' 2. A number of blows on the palm of the hand with a ruler. 3. Considered the worst of all, consisted in being put on the *mute system.* A boy was forbidden to utter an audible sound for a period varying from thirty days to eight months. The only means of communication was by writing on a piece of paper attached to a tablet which hung about the neck. The boy would point to what he had written, the guard would come up and read it, and write an answer. I have seen this method used by the superintendent himself. There were

many other forms of torture too numerous to describe, such as holding the arms in the air for a certain period. We were often desperate. That was why I ran away. But I only got caught. It did no good to complain. There was no one to complain to. Our letters to relatives were a farce. Each boy not punished was permitted to write one letter a month. But he had to write on a blank letter-form. Certain rules governed the correspondence. A boy could make no reference to punishment or in any way mention the treatment he received. He must confine himself to family matters. Every letter had to begin, 'I am well; I hope you are the same,' even though he lay half dead in the hospital. If he was n't able to write the boy who wrote for him must say he was well. Generally, a relative was not informed of a boy's illness until all hope of recovery was past. Only one visit every three months was permitted, and that forfeited if the boy had been punished."

Poor lonely, little Kiddie of eleven with the shackled leg and hungry heart. If that Christmas day so long ago there had been a mother, or an adopted mother, some one to love you, would you ever have reached a State's prison?

SOCIETY'S MISFITS

Would you ever have become what you now term so graphically as "One of the drops in the dirty bucket of water"? Two thirds of the men in State's prisons have been in children's institutions. Further the records show of this two thirds 50 per cent. come from broken-up homes in which either the father or the mother had died before the child was fifteen. Hundreds of lonely little children in institutions exist year after year unkissed, unloved, uncared for. The heart sickens without love; the soul grows hard; evil enters — and society pays. This is what one man at present in Sing Sing prison writes about the child's need of affection:

January 3rd, 1916.

My dear Miss Doty:

Since our talk I have been thinking deeply over the work you are trying to perform. Most every one says they love the kiddies, but few go out of their way to help them. It is magnificent to labor for the boys and girls in the juvenile institutions, where they starve for affection and where they are surrounded by objects that never have the least hint of a home.

My mother died when I was four years old. I am told I loved her very much for a wee kid, and I believe I did if after life is a reflection on childhood. My father placed me in a home very soon after her death. It had very little in common with other juvenile homes, and I only mention it because though it was good in its

Photograph by Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.

Mother care

way it lacked in affection. We had a nurse and a head-matron in charge. I never remember receiving a kiss from either of these two in all my three or four years' residence.

At the age of thirteen I was sentenced to a reformatory. It was a barn, a place for cattle, not for boys. We were allowed to write and receive one visit a month. The first month I must have shed an ocean of tears. I would have given any treasure I possessed to any one who would have written to me or come to see me. The world was a horrible nightmare. I did not receive one kind word, or one letter of love and sympathy from any one. I believe the bitterness of those first months when I could not realize the where and whyfore of things more cruel and heart-aching than all my future misery, of which I can claim a lion's share. I know that experience left its scar upon my soul. There were many brutal things that occurred which we kids never dared to tell any one because we felt that the officials were against us and we knew if we informed the higher officials of the institution the superintendent would belittle the matter, and the officer would get even with us, as soon as he found out who had told.

One instance I remember well. An officer who had charge of the boys' yard gave a little Jewish fellow twenty raps on the hand with a heavy night-stick. The boy's hands were all swollen and he showed them to the superintendent. The superintendent spoke to the officer and told him to be more lenient. The officer immediately punished this boy by making him stand on a line facing the wall of the building. It was April and he said to the boy, " Stay there every hour you are not working until the snow falls again." That boy lost every hour of recreation

for months. Do you think he dared to tell the officials again?

There was never a fatherly feeling among the officers for the boys, let alone a motherly one. It is surprising that any one of us have retained any of the finer feelings after having passed through these brutalizing institutions. It is a wonder any of us could come through the cold, unfriendly atmosphere and still respond to the feeling of kindness.

Besides the cruelty of the officers, the older boys could do most anything to the smaller kids. Immorality was and is common in these places. Had kids a mother or a sympathetic friend to confide in they would have steered clear of practices that certainly warped their lives.

Small boys, especially, crave affection. They do not get it from home for they are not allowed to write and pour out their hearts; they do not get it from the officials; so they fall an easy prey to any older boy who is kind, who will give them a few sweetmeats. Then the older boy, if he is immoral, can do as he chooses. So the affection needed is supplied, or rather bought, and the price is horrible. This exists in all asylums to-day, as it always has, because of the lack of affection. The punishments in the reformatory in 1903–4 were more severe for boys from five to eighteen years of age than they are in State's Prison to-day, for men. A dark cell, hard boards at night, bread and water and actual physical torture in the daytime, was the mode of punishing little tots, and growing boys.

I was whispering in the Chapel one evening just before service began. An officer came behind me and struck me so hard on the ear that I could not hear for ten days. Even to-day I have trouble with that ear. I cried myself

to sleep with pain that night. They put me in a dark cell the next time for whispering in the dining-hall. I nearly went frantic. It seemed I was buried alive. This is one of the most inhuman things about juvenile institutions. A boy or girl who is the least bit timid should never be put into a dark cell and left there. It leaves an indelible mark upon his character. He goes through life with a sort of horrible fear of isolation.

I believe every institution where boys are sent and left unfriended, unloved, unadvised, and above all unable to tell things freely and confidentially to those they love and trust is a menace to the State. Permission to write and explain injuries, fears, and troubles is the keynote to the situation of doing some good for the boys and girls confined in institutions.

Miss Doty, I hope this will help a little. The one recommendation I think of at present is that a great deal of attention should be paid to those first few months a boy is incarcerated. These are the hardest for him to understand and the loneiest period of all.

Sincerely yours,

H. E.

What a letter! I close my eyes and see a procession of sobbing children, children with tear-stained cheeks, pleading eyes, and outstretched hands. It is not to be borne.

There are millions of women eager to serve and thousands of motherless children in institutions. The two must be brought together. One letter a week to a lonely child would transform

life. Half the prisons in the world would be emptied if neglected and delinquent children had a mother's love. But to make this possible, silly institutional rules must be abolished. Mother and child and adopted mother and child must be able to correspond and see each other freely and confidentially. Nothing must stand in the way of the child's need of affection. Children are not bits of machinery to be beaten into a mold. Each child is an entity. Each child has a soul. Each child needs individual love.

Think of the abandoned, nameless, and homeless children thrust into asylums. I met such a one. He was a convict without a name. "'Who are you? Where do you come from?' Those are the questions that haunt me," he said. His voice quivered; his hand shook. "From babyhood those questions have been flung at me. They wrecked my life. You are the only person who has said it did n't matter. You say, 'Do something big and then the question will be, "What have you done?"— not, "Who are you?" God! If only that might be. I never thought that way before, but may be you 're right. I 'll begin by helping you. I 'll tell everything about my childhood."

WANTED — A MOTHER

The faded blue eyes looked into mine. His courage was all but gone. His virility had been sapped. Drugs, bad habits, and disease had left their mark. His words were disconnected. Seething emotion robbed him of speech. But little by little he told his story. Later he wrote it out. This is what he said:

Friend:

You have consented to let me call you friend and I appreciate it. I was so choked with feeling this afternoon I could n't say what I wished. I will do all I can to assist you.

I was n't born evil. Evil was grated on me. Let me speak frankly. Twenty-seven years ago I was born in so-called cultured and staid, old Boston. But as far as I can remember I became conscious of existence around the age of seven. In a place for destitute children I first learned the meaning of the word fear. There I was taught to be suspicious of mankind. There I learned the shallowness of humanity. In fact, it was there the seed of evil was sown within me. Why, why, if there is a God does He let innocent children come into a world of sorrow and shame!

Always two questions haunt me—"Who are you?" and, "Where do you come from?" These questions I can never answer. They have caused me pain and humiliation. I hate to think of the past, but I 'm doing it to shed a little light on your work. Perhaps if I do I may be able to answer the question: "What have you done to make the world a better place?" Perhaps I can help

a little to give the down-trodden offspring of society what I should so have liked — some one, somewhere who loved me.

I remember well the matrons in charge of the asylum. It is Saturday morning and bath day. The matron picks out two of the older boys to help. I am always one of the helpers. The matron is there for discipline. We undress the tiny children. In so doing we must be careful not to expose them. If we do there is a lash of the cane. Could anything be so utterly foolish as such sublime modesty on the part of matrons who think nothing of stripping a child naked and beating him? Such actions give children bad thoughts. They become frightened if a matron looks at them. They fear they will be beaten for something they cannot understand.

Religion we had always, and then *some*. I have nothing to say against religion. It's a fine thing, but like everything else taken to excess it is bound to put a crimp in one somewhere. If they would only take a simpler form of teaching religion, I'm sure it would be more successful. They try to drive religion into you by fear. As a matter of fact what we begin to fear we begin to hate.

When I was still very little I was adopted by an undertaker. That place was a nightmare. For a bad childish habit, I was punished by not being allowed to drink any water after three in the afternoon. You can imagine the craving of a little child for water. It taught me my first lesson in scheming. I would wait until every one was asleep then I would get out on the back porch. There was an old barrel which caught the rain water drained from the roof. This dirty water I would drink to my heart's content and, believe me, it tasted good. It is

little things like this helped make me what I am to-day — a convict. I learned to be tricky and cruel. I would go into the barn and pick up the little kittens and put them in the horses' manger or under their feet. It seemed to be the only way I could satisfy my feeling of hate toward these people.

One day some money was left on the mantel and could not be found. Of course, I was accused. I told them I didn't take it. But I was called a liar and thief and told that children such as I were never any good; that if we were, we wouldn't be sent out to be taken care of by others. From that day I felt the real meaning of the word mother. I would sit and cry for hours for the mother I never knew. I would ask where she was and say I wanted her. But they only laughed and mocked, and said strange things I didn't understand. It was then those questions began to haunt me. Who are you? Where do you come from? It was then I became careless about going to the house. I felt I wasn't welcome. I slept where I could; sometimes in the woods, sometimes in an old building. Eat! God alone knows where I ate. In the daytime I would play with boys I had met at public school in the hope they would ask me to dinner or supper, and when they did, that question would rise like a ghost in the dark — "Little boy, what is your mother's name? Where do you live?" I suppose the children's mothers investigated and found out the truth, because my playmates dropped off one by one, until finally I had no one to whom I could say hello.

It was about this time an agent came and took me back to the home. After awhile I was adopted again. A newly married couple came in search of a boy who would be presentable around the place to run an elevator. They

picked me out. They were really the nicest people I was ever with. The man was janitor of an apartment house. A gentleman lived in one of the apartments. He used to come into the elevator and talk to me. He never asked me where I came from or who I was. At first I liked him. He asked me to his apartment to see his beautiful things. But I will never forget that first visit. That man taught me to be a degenerate. After that nothing was too good for me. But the janitor became suspicious because this man gave me so many presents and so much money. Eventually I took the money I had and ran away. They must have sent out in search of me, for one night when I was walking along the street a policeman grabbed me and told me a man at the police station wanted me. The minute I saw the man I recognized him as an agent from the home. He treated me very kindly and took me to a hotel for the night. Then I found he, too, was a degenerate. I only tell you this in passing, to show you what an educating start I had. Perhaps, if every one knew what was behind the closed doors of a convict's life, they would not be so ready to blame us.

The next day the agent took me, not to the home, but to an industrial school. The superintendent seemed to be kind. He called me "dear son," and said I would have a fine time. He took me into a tower and showed me what he called a beautiful place. All I could see was a lot of shops enclosing a small yard, and a high wall, which I learned afterwards was to prevent boys from running away. My first unpleasant experience was having all my hair taken off. Soon afterwards I was introduced to punishment. This consisted in being stripped and beaten with a rubber hose, with enough force to make even a tiger yelp with pain.

When a feller needs a friend

While I was there I never saw or experienced any good, wholesome education. It was much like the asylum in this respect. All we were taught was religion, and, believe me, it was a mockery to faith.

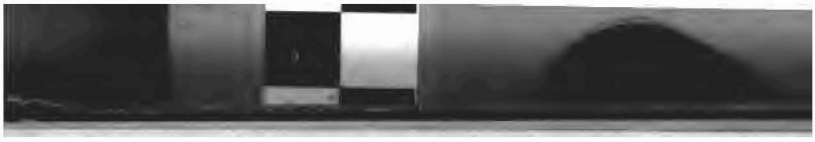
One evening I felt dreadfully sick and could n't eat. The keeper in charge said I must eat. When I refused he made me kneel on the floor, and punched me and knocked me down. I tried to get up but he felled me again. From that time I made up my mind to get away. One day when the boys were sent to shovel snow from the sidewalk I managed to escape. You can imagine my feeling (even though it was mid-winter) at being free again.

I went directly to the naval recruiting station, I passed the examination for enlistment, but again came up those questions: "Who are you? Where do you come from?" I was ashamed and framed up a plausible story. But it would n't do — I must have the consent of my folks. You see, this was another overthrow by fate. I did n't know what was to become of me — I was an outcast. I went from place to place to get some kind of work. I was hungry and had barely enough clothes to cover me. At night I slept in a delivery wagon in a barn.

Finally I got a job in a café. I received $6 a week and my suppers. I hired a room and lived as I thought, like a prince for nearly a year. I was in bed every night at nine; my health was perfect; for once I was enjoying myself. I met some nice people. A woman who had an official position took an interest in me and gave me books to read. She asked me what I would like to be. I told her a civil engineer. After a while she said if my mother would be willing to board and clothe me she could get me a free education. I did n't want to tell her the truth. I was ashamed. Time and again I have gone to the orphan

asylum to try to find out the truth. But the matrons would never tell me anything. They said a lot of things were better not known. They would never tell me whether my folks were living or dead. You can imagine my feelings all these years. Not even a relative could I name. But I have n't given up hope. I have traveled all over this country and everywhere I try to find out something about my people. But it has been a vain quest. If I could know the truth probably it would change my way of living. Always when I have known nice people, I have run away rather than tell them the truth.

One night in the café a young fellow came in and began talking to me. Finally he asked me to go to a show. I jumped at the invitation because I could not afford such pleasures. After the theater he took me to supper. I did n't know what to make of it. This was the first time I ever took part in the drama of wealth. The next day he came to see me and took me to lunch. He bought me a whole new outfit. I began to feel the power of money and good clothes. But eventually I realized what it all meant. Consequently, I determined to lose him. I left my job and found a new one. But he followed me. I gave in and went with him. It was the beginning of the end. My crime wave began and has been going ever since. I was down and out. My health was shattered. I had nothing. I walked the streets all night so I wouldn't be arrested. My mind was in a flurry. I walked into a place and stole an overcoat, and sold it to buy some food. I was arrested. The probation officer asked where I lived. I told him the truth. I was put on probation. But I was as badly off as ever. Shortly afterwards I stole a French lens, worth $150 and sold it for $1. I was sent to jail for three months. I did a lot of thinking while



there. I thought of my past. It seemed the hand of fate was against me when I tried to go straight. I thought of the days as a little child when I prayed (it sounds like a joke), with tears in my eyes, as only a faithful child can pray, I begged God to help me in time of need, but all in vain. I have gone hungry and sick in the very streets of plenty. I have seen children with their mothers, enjoying themselves, while I was lonesome. My only friends had been my real enemies, human leeches taking my life away. I thought of the days as a child when I had been refused water to drink. How I had been wrongfully accused of stealing. How I had been mocked because I cried for my mother. I had learned the shallowness of humanity. Even the hand of God seemed turned against me, and I swore in that little cell I would not play in the hands of fate. No, I would take fate into my own hands. I would hate all, I would lie and steal; I would do everything against the laws of God and man. The things I learned in those melting pots of crime came to my assistance. I became crafty and distrustful of every one. I made no friends; if I did it was simply to rob them. The hate which had been burning within me all those years, came out. Before the age of twenty I was arrested for robbery on the high seas; grand larceny, forgery, and burglary. I have been arrested all over the United States and Canada. Both by the federal and State authorities. No doubt I am receiving my just punishments; but then again, if I had got my just rights as a child, I would not have become a convict. I tried to live and live right. I did all I could to keep away from crime. I had no mother's hand to guide me; I had no father's arm to protect me; I had no home to go to, with a mother's welcoming voice. I could not make

true friends, because I was unable to answer those two questions. I am a convict to-day because I do not know who I am or where I came from — and no one cares.

God have pity on us, for we know not what we do. Only such a plea makes life endurable after such a story. But now we cannot plead ignorance. It rests upon us to break down the high walls, the barred windows, and the relentless discipline of children's institutions. Past all obstacles, straight to the heart of the child we must penetrate. We women, mothers and potential mothers, must see that not one helpless baby goes uncherished. Joy, love, and gladness. These are the new notes to be brought into institutions. How much affection does each child receive is the fundamental question. Surely the women of the United States will answer the call and go hammering at the doors of institutions, crying: "We come to save babies from becoming criminals. We come laden with love. No child is to go uncared for. An unbroken rank of women waits ready to respond to every call of 'Wanted — A Mother.'"

THE GENESIS OF THE GANG

"IF I had a son," writes a convict, "and there was no way to support him, I would shoot him rather than send him to a reformatory.

"I was sent five times. The first time I learned to pick pockets. The second, to creep behind a man with a bat, hit him on the head, and take his money. The third, to stick a man up with a gun and so on — each time something new.

"Since I have been in State's Prison, I have spent fourteen months in the cooler (a punishment cell). While there I learned how to blow open a safe. But since Tom Brown [Thomas Mott Osborne] came to prison and started the Mutual Welfare League I have dropped everything, and mean to make good."

Lawyers, policemen, and judges cannot end crime. When we hurry trembling across a dark street late at night, fearing a blow on the head and robbery, or shiver in our beds listening for

the stealthy step of a burglar, remember that two thirds of these men we fear were in children's institutions. We had a chance to reform them but did n't. For reformatories don't reform. They punish and humiliate, but do not educate. To remake the bad boy, life in an institution must fit him for life in the world. There must be love, work, and play inside because these are in the world outside. If a boy can't have a normal life behind walls, how can he live normally in society? Institutions do not recognize this. The child is cut off from companionship, his home — his mother — the love that remakes him. Letters and visits are limited. Nor does the institution teach him to work or to play.

The industrial training is a travesty. These are the comments of convicts now in Auburn and Sing Sing who were previously in reformatories:

"The industrial department of the reformatory was sadly neglected. The machinery and tools were antiquated. The work was suited to while away time. It looks as though the authorities anticipated the future of the inmates and trained them accordingly. A trade learned in one institution could be resumed in another but

not in the outside world. The printing and machine shop employ about twenty inmates each. The great mass of boys learn nothing. Over one half are employed in domestic service."

And this:

"I worked in the storeroom and matrons' dining-room. I can't tell about the trades because the only thing I learned was to wash dishes, scrub floors, and carry a bag of potatoes."

And this:

"The industrial training was no good. They taught us to make inmates' shoes. They were on the same style as brogans. I could never find work of that kind outside. It must have been a bum trade, for when I went to State's Prison I could n't get work there, making the kind of shoes I 'd made at the reformatory."

And this:

"The only trade they taught us was bookbinding which you can't use when you get out. I got a job at it once for a half hour, then the boss kicked me out. He said: 'If I was a bookbinder — he was a farmer!'"

When the child's work is a source of profit, the institution may teach him something, but the price paid for the knowledge is frightful. Hour

after hour aching, childish forms bend over a dreary task.

"I worked in the brush shop. I was supposed to make twelve brushes a day. Every time I made one, some one would steal it to fill their own task. When I turned in my work I had only three brushes. The foreman hit me over the head with a stick, but that was n't all. I was taken down to the washhouse and beaten. That was how I started to steal. When I was sent back to the shop I did like the others. I stole my brushes whenever I could."

The educational training is no better. I know convicts who cannot read or write. The comments on the school work are as follows:

"At school I worried over the beating I would get for missing a lesson. I could n't put my mind on anything.

"The teacher was incompetent. He put an example on the board and called on a boy to do it. If he failed he ordered him to get on his knees and gave him ten raps with a switch.

"The fifth class was known as the blockhead class. The officer in charge was called the 'Boob.' All the boys made fun of him. The only thing he knew was his prayers.

Only potentially bad, but they are apt pupils of the vicious boys to be found in every institution

"The school curriculum is a travesty on pedagogical principles. The main occupation is cutting pictures out of magazines to adorn composition papers."

The average institutional visitor sees nothing of all this and is deceived. He beholds a group of well-washed children; the band plays, the children drill, there is a good lunch, and the officials are zealously attentive. But beneath this polished surface, childish hearts are being trampled on and ignorant, untaught children turned into bitter, revengeful boys. Neither the drill nor the band is popular. This is why:

"There were three yards, and each yard had to drill for a flag which was given to the best drilled company. The companies that did n't win knew what was coming to them. Each boy got a beating!

"The institutional band is frequently a source of profit. It furnishes music at numerous entertainments, and the authorities receive for such service five or ten dollars. The children get nothing, but are beaten when they do not play well."

One institution I visited emphasized its industrial training. It had a thousand boys and I found only 250 engaged in industry. There were

twenty-four boys in the carpenter shop. During their two years' term they were the only ones to learn carpentry. It was too much trouble to break in new pupils.

The work was decorative rather than substantial — a training that did not fit a boy to compete in that trade in the outside world. It was the same in the other industries, while the majority of the children, seven hundred or more, performed domestic labor. They washed dishes, made beds, scrubbed floors, or idled.

In the course of my inspection, I passed a cellar door. Cellars will always bear visiting. I darted in, the official with me followed hastily. There was n't a window in the place. It was damp and dark. By the light of the open door I saw forty or fifty boys ranged about the wall. It was half-past two. The sun was shining brightly. The air outside was full of spring sweetness. "What are they here for?" I asked. There was a pause, the official cleared his throat, then inquired feebly, "What are you here for, boys?" Still silence. This time a restless silence. Then the official made another attempt. "I guess the boys must be through their work and waiting; are you waiting, boys?" Out of

that dark hole obediently and in unison came the reply, "Yes, sir." As I left that damp and desolate place these lines flashed across me:

The vilest deeds, like poisoned weeds, bloom well in prison air.

Institutions generally seem to be run for the benefit of the keepers rather than for the children. There is a deadly routine about them, an unbelievable monotony. There is no chance for initiative. Individuality is crushed out. The children are handled like merchandise. They are shoved and pushed about by unfeeling hands. They live in grim, ugly buildings. There are barred or grated windows, great dreary corridors, bare walls, monotonous rows of beds, chairs, and tables. Morning, noon, and night there is the sound of shuffling feet, an endless procession of blue-ginghamed, or gray-uniformed, pale-faced, inanimate, unsmiling children. A bell rings and the children arise, another bell rings and the children sit down. Answers to questions come from a hundred throats in expressionless unison.

The institutional child is like a cog in a machine. Detached he cannot go on alone. One

day a convict came to me who had slept for three nights on a park bench. He was as helpless as a child. He wanted to make good and did n't know how.

"At five," he said, "I was sent to an institution. I was there thirteen years. When released I was helpless. I 've been so ever since. I 'd eaten and slept to order too long. I did n't know how to earn bed and board. There was nothing left but to run with the gang and steal. Last night I was desperate and went to the police station and asked to be locked up and kept out of harm's way but they only laughed. What can I do?"

It is the clever bad boy who flourishes in the gray deadness of a reformatory. Out of the welter of misery, with cunning and strength, he emerges. It is a case of the survival of the fittest. The fittest in a reformatory is the bully and the degenerate. He usurps the play space at play time, and dominates wherever he goes. By underground methods he spreads his contamination and stirs to action. So gangsters and gunmen are made and society pays.

"I was the bully of the yard," says a member of such a gang. "I used to get from ten to

twenty-five dollars a month from the boys. I did n't keep the money. I shared it with the keepers who let me go to the mess-hall and drink beer and whisky with them."

And this from a well-known gunman:

"The worst place in the world for any mother's son is the —— reformatory. I would n't wish my worst enemy to undergo what I went through.

"All the New York City gangsters and gunmen were in a reformatory in boyhood. A few that I know were Jack Zelig, Kid Twist, Dopy Benny, the 'Paper Box Kid,' and Dago Frank. The last two have both been at Sing Sing."

In some institutions boys are appointed monitors by the officers. This is bad. It gives power to the bully as is shown in this testimony of a gangster:

"The monitor system should be abolished. It is a reign of petty tyranny and makes gangsters and bullies. The treatment the kids are subjected to at the hand of the monitors is satanic. None but the worst element are ever appointed monitors because, being the leader of a gang, they can enforce discipline. 'Might is right' under this system. For infractions of the rules or alleged infractions the monitor can beat the

kids. It can easily be seen the terrible whip hand he has.

"Under this system immorality flourishes. A kid can be forced to anything. He has to surrender his bundles from home and even his food. If he dares complain it is only the worse for him."

The other day an ex-convict who was a gangster came to me. He was just out of State's Prison, and wanted a job. For the first time in his life he meant to go straight.

At the age of ten he was sent to a reformatory. Soon he and eleven other boys were running together and formed a small gang. After three years they were discharged. There came a few weeks of lawlessness on the streets, but one by one they all turned up in another reformatory — a grade further on. Soon they were in command of a yard. My narrator explained:

"In the reformatory it was gang against gang to see who would be the *up* of the yard. One of the fellows who was a friend of mine was stabbed in the lungs. All they did for him was to put a piece of plaster on the cut and put him to bed. The next day they had him up waxing the floor. In a couple of days he was dead. The fellow who

stabbed him is at Sing Sing doing seven to fifteen years."

This is true. It is corroborated by twenty different witnesses, including the man doing time at Sing Sing.

This gang of twelve became a rough set. It was their second reformatory experience. They performed many daring deeds, often making escapes. The leader once got away in half a barrel, which served as a boat. He floated for some time before he was picked up by a tug.

When the reformatory term expired the boys reassembled in New York. This time they hired a room. They had all acquired the drug habit. It was their one pleasure.

When the drug gave out, first one then another went out to procure more. Eventually they were all caught, and soon were serving terms in the penitentiary or Elmira reformatory. Released from these institutions their sojourn in society was brief. Presently they were all together again in State's Prison.

To-day nine are in prison, three are out, none are making good, and one at the age of twenty-two has just been executed at Sing Sing. He killed an Italian and two policemen. Needless

to say these murders were the result of a gang fight.

Unless we remake our children's institutions, gangsters and gunmen will flourish. What is needed is not great severity but more love and human understanding. Here is a typical story of a boy who became a gangster:

"I was sent to a reformatory and put to work in the carpenter shop outside the walls. I got this job because my aunt had a pull with the authorities. One day I ran away, but after fifteen days I was caught, taken back, and put in a dark cell, without even a bed. I can stand such treatment to-day but when I was thirteen it seemed pretty bad. Next day, I was given punishment clothes. These are full of patches and make you look like a ragamuffin. Then my hair was cut cannibal style. A piece is chopped out here and there. The result made you look like an idiot and caused much laughter. Then I was sent to the yard to stand by the post all day. At night I had to stand in the dormitory in my bare feet for three hours. But that was n't all. While I was standing by my bed the Director came in and motioned me to go into the hall. All I had on was a thin nightgown. I was beaten

A group of reformatory boys

on the back and shoulders until I was black and blue. My aunt came to see me and I told her how I had been treated. She complained to the Director, and through her influence I was again put into the carpenter shop to learn a trade. I might say here that they don't teach anything. You could work a hundred years there and never learn. At that time I was very anxious to take lessons on the violin. The man in charge, like all the others, was a brute. After six weeks, I said I did n't like music. The truth is I was crazy to learn but could n't stand the keeper. He was often under the influence of liquor. I have seen him carried to his room. This man's method of teaching was to stand over the violin and choir boys, and, if they missed a note, he beat them with a rod.

"This method of teaching was also used in the school. If you got an example wrong you were beaten. When I entered the reformatory a boy friend put me wise. He said: 'Don't be too smart when examined. Get in a low class where you can be sure of doing the work.' I followed his advice and got along all right.

"After a while I ran away again. In forty-five days I was caught. I landed in the institu-

tion at half-past nine, and was put in a dark cell. But to my surprise, the next morning I was not punished. I think my aunt must have interceded but this time I was not sent outside. I was put to work in the harness shop. The foreman in charge was not fit to handle beasts, let alone boys. He carried around with him a leather strap. If he did n't like your work, he struck you across the head.

"I was working on a horse trace one day and could not keep up with my task. The boy at the table with me was sick and did n't make the wax cords as fast as usual. The foreman asked why I had n't finished my task. I told him I did n't feel well. He did n't say a word but watched me for a few minutes, then struck me across the neck. I seized my awl and tried to hit him. Then he took me to the cellar and made me take off my shirt, and beat me until he was played out. I went to the shop, sick and tired of life. During the night I tried to think of some way out. The next day I went to the back of the harness shop, took a bottle of harness ink, and swallowed as much as I could hold. That was all I remember until I came to at eleven that night. They put me in a special bed, called in two doctors, and

worked over me nine hours. I often wonder why I did not die. They said I had swallowed enough poison to kill a horse. When I got better the Director sent for me. He asked why I had tried to kill myself. He patted me on the head and smiled. I stood there looking at him, wishing to God I had the strength to spring at him and strangle him until he was blue in the face. Anyway I was taken out of the harness shop and given a job in the yard sweeping leaves and taking care of the grass plots.

"In the meantime my aunt came to see me. I told her my trouble, but the Director came in and said I had a melancholy disposition. He said I had swallowed a little ink but it had n't hurt me. He patted me on the head and said to come to him for anything I needed. My aunt believed in him, for though he was a brute, he had polished manners and was a suave talker.

"Then I made a third and last escape. After two months I was caught. It was the same old story, a dark cell, a beating, and standing in the yard.

"But this time I was older and my term expired.

"This is the first time I ever wrote anything

so long. When I entered prison, I took an oath that if I lived to be a thousand years old I would never again attempt to do anything honest, or have anything to do with anybody that was honest. I had a bitter feeling against society, but when you asked me to write my story, I went to my cell, and did some hard thinking. I thought of the fact that you spent a week in a woman's prison voluntarily, and that convinced me that you were on the level, and I decided to write this. I have seen reformers come and go, I have seen investigating committees come and go, and, believe me, they have never accomplished much.

"Our Chaplain is lecturing on, 'Why men and women go to prison,' but neither the Chaplain nor any one else can tell why people go to prison, unless they go into the big cities and reformatories and study conditions. You let a man out of prison who has been taught nothing and he gets in trouble. Then society drives him in again, and asks why does n't he reform. It 's impossible. An ex-convict can't get work. He is put out of theaters, put off street-cars, and not allowed to go on the principal thoroughfares. Can you blame him for adhering to the criminal class?"

THE GENESIS OF THE GANG

Small wonder this boy turned a gangster. He had faced death, and he feared nothing. He had been beaten and abused and taught nothing. His only friends were his gang-mates. He lined up with them against society. But the gang spirit in itself is a valuable asset. It can be turned to good account instead of to evil. The group spirit can be used to protect instead of destroy society. If those in authority say it can't be done, if they say the reformatory boy is vicious and human methods are impracticable, don't believe them. Sing Sing has been transformed by inspiring men with the ideal of mutual welfare. Fifteen hundred convicts march in to meals unaccompanied by keepers or guards. They talk together while they eat, they work and play together. There has n't been a riot in over a year, not since self-government was established. There are no beatings or punishment cells. The men discipline themselves. This is done by a convict court. There are five convict judges. Every afternoon at four court assembles in the shabby old chapel. The judges sit on the platform; directly below and in front stands the offender. The chapel is crowded with spectators, convicts and visitors; all are welcome. One day

a colored man, a prize fighter, was brought before the tribunal for assault. He was a husky fellow who performed heavy prison labor. In return for his hard task once a week he received a beef-steak. Beef-steak night was a gala occasion. This was the day after and he had been charged with hitting a colored friend. The man who had been hit spoke first.

"It was this way, gentlemen: I had a can of beans, Ise took 'em to the kitchen to warm, and when I goes to fetch the beans de kitchen gentleman handed out a beef-steak and fried potatoes. Just naturally, I was n't going to refuse that beef-steak."

"What is your story?" inquired the Court of the prize-fighter. The prize-fighter's eyes rolled.

"Well, ye see, gentlemen, I 'd been saving up for that beef-steak. I had n't eaten anything all day. When I goes to the kitchen it 's gone. I could n't stop thinking about it. I dreamed of that beef-steak and potatoes, and, naturally, when I gits up next mornin' I goes for that feller and gives him a biff."

There was a ripple of laughter among the spectators. Each felt he would have done likewise. Even the participants grinned. The humor of

the occasion seized them. The man who had been hit spoke up: "Say, your honors, Ise satisfied if the other feller is. I got the beefsteak."

A shout of laughter greeted this. The prizefighter did not wish to be outdone, and he spoke up: "Ise satisfied; I give the biff." This brought down the house.

The Court paused reflectively, then issued its verdict: "Time — shake hands."

Amidst general merriment the two colored men joined hands. They will not fight again. They and all present had learned a lesson in decency and fair play. But under the old system the men would have been clapped in a dark cell in the basement, and kept there for five days on bread and water. Day by day hate would have grown in their hearts. When released they would have flown at each other. There might have been murder. One gang would have arisen against another. The prison would have been filled with violence and bloodshed.

If such kindly understanding methods are successful with so-called hardened criminals, surely boys can be reclaimed. One convict sums up the situation in this way:

"One great mistake is underestimating the intelligence of the street gamin. He has reasoning power far beyond what he is credited with. A great part of the problem lies in securing persons who really understand the kid."

These things women understand. They have had experience in the nursery. They are interested in details. They know each child must be treated separately and as an individual. Therefore it rests with them to change the gray, monotonous, factory-like reformatories into homes. The old prison method of punishment and revenge must be abolished and a new method which prepares for life, substituted. Institutional doors must be thrown open, sunshine, love, education, and responsibility enter in. This must be done for society's sake, if not for the child's. Otherwise we will have untaught, revengeful boys uniting in gangs to plunder and murder. Gangsters and gunmen will flourish and society suffer.

THE FATE OF A REFORMATORY BOY

"HAPPY JACK" was the man who awakened my interest in prison reform. He was the first convict I visited. I had come away from the children's court in despair. Johnnie Jones had been arrested for the third time. Two terms in a reformatory had n't reformed him. Our correctional system seemed a failure. It was then I first determined to ask prison inmates who had been institutional children, why so many institutions were failures.

With this in mind I made my first visit to Sing Sing Prison. It was a warm spring day at the end of April, a day when all life seemed suddenly to burst into blossom. As I entered the dingy old doorway of the gray, grim building, a prisoner passed. He was between two sturdy guards. He was clad in the gray prison uniform and his face had the gray prison pallor. But beneath the gray surface was a man. There was quiet dignity in his bearing. His muscular,

forceful figure was wiry. He was short but powerful. He had the jaw and chin of a fighter. The guard said something and the prisoner smiled, a radiant, Irish smile that made the blue eyes shine, a smile that had won for him the name of "Happy Jack." In that first glance I felt this is a man to help me with my problem. He disappeared into the Warden's office and immediately I asked for his story. Happy Jack was thirty-two years old. His first arrest was at the age of ten. Since then he had served several terms in reformatories and prisons. He was now behind the bars on a charge of murder. He was to have been executed but twenty-four hours before the end he obtained a stay on the ground of newly discovered evidence. Briefly his case was this: Late at night three men entered a saloon, killed an unarmed saloon-keeper, and attempted to rob the till. Happy Jack was charged with the murder. The only evidence against him was a note-book bearing his name found near the saloon, and a confession signed by Happy Jack which the police wrung from him under the third degree. Jack claimed he did not know what he was doing when he signed the confession, that he did it under the influence of drugs. He said he

had an alibi and could show he was n't near the saloon the night of the murder. Because of this his case had been reopened. A criminal court judge had come up from the city to rehear the case. The retrial was held in the Warden's office and I secured permission to attend the proceedings.

At a long table sat " Happy Jack," and beside him an officer with thick wooden club, watching every movement. Across the table sat the Judge, the prosecuting attorney, four detectives, a brother of the murdered man, some prison officials, and newspaper reporters. All eyes were on the prisoner and all eyes were curious, or indifferent, only Jack's lawyer's were friendly. To his fellowmen the man in gray clothes was a queer and vicious animal, whom they prodded to see the effect produced. The Judge leaned across the table to whisper to me, " The man is a typical criminal, I want you to watch him."

Every one was on his guard and suspicious, only " Happy Jack " was serene. Suddenly the significance of the scene burst upon me. A human being was fighting for his life, appealing to a stereotyped, legal-minded, noncomprehending body of men, who coldly analyzed and judged.

A bitter, up-hill fight. This same group of men had once before heard and condemned the prisoner and would surely do so again to vindicate their former decision. The Judge complacently reviewed his own case, his mind already made up. The prosecuting attorney did his work coldly and cleverly, twisting and weighing every word the prisoner uttered. The perspiration stood on " Happy Jack's " brow. He continually moistened his lips and asked for water, otherwise there was no sign of the strain he was under. He was courteous and dignified and occasionally his bright smile played about his lips. " Why did n't you tell that story to your attorney at the first trial? " inquired the Judge at one point. " Because," replied the prisoner smiling brightly, " I did n't tell him anything. I was sore. A pal told me, Judge, that you gave me my attorneys for a frame-up; he said you had a grudge and meant to do me." The Judge frowned. " That is n't so," he snapped. " Surely you would n't trust the word of an ex-convict rather than that of a judge? " A quizzical look crept into the prisoner's eyes; then it changed to one of engaging frankness, as he leaned across to the Judge and addressed him as man to man.

"Why sure, your Honor, if I don't think the Judge was on the level." A little gasp went round the room. Invigorating as a gust of fresh air, was such astounding honesty under such handicap. The Judge flushed, then in an irritated tone flung out, "To prove that is n't so, to show you how little you mean, two minutes after I sentenced you to death I never thought of you again."

If "Happy Jack" did not shrink, I did. To condemn a man to death and never think of it again — a man like Happy Jack. I looked at the prisoner; he was looking at me. I wondered what he was thinking. Suddenly it flashed upon me that this convict stood out from his fellows, dignified, poised, tolerant, with a wonderful sense of humor. This man had power — he was not a weakling. Whatever wrong he had committed, it was power misdirected. If he had violated society's laws it was because as a child society had neglected and abused him.

For days the trial dragged on. Sometimes I listened, sometimes I lost patience. No one seemed to get to the bottom of things. Had Jack lied or had n't he? Was this piece of evidence

true or was n't it? Over such points the lawyers wrangled. I tried to make the District Attorney realize he was dealing with human life, that Jack was worth saving, that he was n't a coward; that the murder was a cowardly one, that, therefore, Jack had n't committed it. But he did n't understand. He admitted the evidence of guilt was slight, but protested the trial was a fair one. This clean-cut, active-minded instrument of the law was as cold and unyielding as a machine. Only twice in his career has he lost a case and he did not mean to lose this one.

Even the prisoner grew weary. He asked for a private hearing and offered to tell the Judge his life history. But a judge's business is to expound the law — not straighten out a tangled human life. He was n't interested. He did n't desire a private interview with a "dangerous criminal." "Happy Jack" understood. He measured his judge as man measures man. Perhaps, unconsciously, the Judge realized what was going on in the convict's mind, for he grew daily more relentless. At frequent intervals he attempted to justify his feelings by announcing that Jack was stamped with guilt and a coward. One

day he leaned across to me and said: "I should like to witness the man's execution, and watch his face. I'm so sure he is a coward."

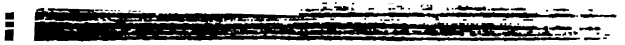
So this perfectly sound, legal proceeding continued, piling up insignificant fact upon fact until the verdict again was guilty. And all the time what I wanted to know, what society ought to want to know, was: "Was this man a menace, or could he be saved and reformed? Why had he gone wrong? Was it his fault or ours? Had he ever been given a chance? Had he been bent crooked and might he be put straight, or was he fundamentally vicious?" I secured a court order and began to visit "Happy Jack" in the death-house. Little by little I learned his story. I sat in a chair in front of his cell, while he sat on the edge of his cot, grasping the iron bars, and gazing out at me. At first we were hampered by the surroundings. It was hard to forget time and place and who we were and talk as one human being to another. But finally it came. As soon as he saw he could be of service, the barriers were down. Little by little I got the story. Some of it he told, some of it he wrote. The entire night before his execution was spent writing his story that was to help the "kids."

The last time I saw Jack he was leaning against the bars of his cell; his hand above his head grasped the cold iron; his body was pressed against the barred door. There was a wistful smile about his lips and in the deep blue eyes. We had talked for several hours. "Good-by," he said and his hand shot out between the bars and grasped mine. I held his a minute, as I whispered: "Courage, I have n't given up yet. I may still get the pardon." He hated to have me go. I was the last link with the outer world, and we both felt instinctively it was the final visit. His eyes searched mine and into them came a look of deep understanding. Again he smiled and then turned away and I crept out of the door of the death-chamber with sinking heart. This is what "Happy Jack" wrote:

Dear Friend:

It 's two A. M. Monday. Only a few hours more and they come for me. A guard stands outside my cell day and night. They don't want me to end it, yet they 're going to kill me. Dying is n't hard — it 's the waiting — waiting and thinking. Down past the barred cells at the end of the corridor is a little door. It opens into the room with the chair. Several men have gone that way since I 've been here. Big Bill went last week. It 's my turn in a few hours. For fifteen months I 've been locked

A prison picture of Happy Jack



in. Been lying in this cell waitin' and thinkin'. God—but it nearly drives a man crazy. If only there was a place to walk, but in a cage 7 x 4 with a bed there ain't no room for luxuries. There 're fifteen of us in the death-house, clinging to the bars. We 're fed and watched and one by one we 're led out. Sometimes a man goes clean dippy. That man, who was yellin' in the padded cell the other day when you was here, was one of us. After a while he came round. He has a little girl and got thinkin'.

It 's a terrible thing to die for a wrong committed by another, but it 'll be a relief to get out of this. There is n't much more time, but before I go I 'm doing everything in my power to write what I promised. I 've had a lot to do and I hope you won't be disappointed if my story is short. I have been writing ever since early Sunday. I 'm sorry I distrusted you at first. But you will understand. You talked so friendly with the Judge, and a man who 's once been in prison don't trust any one.

If you or some one like you had gotten me when I was a kid, I would n't be here now, but I 'm not complaining as my life was only a joke. I had to fight since a kid, getting a kick and a punch from everybody, and I hated everybody until I seen you and the people who helped me lately. I did n't believe there was a good man in the world, but now I 'd make any sacrifice for you. I 'm sorry we did n't meet before this trouble. You are doing a God's work and my only regret in going is that I can't help.

I have read the book you gave me and wish to say it is great ["A Bunch of Little Thieves," by Greenburg]. The life of Michael Roach is in a big part the true life of the poor boy of to-day. The introduction to the book

cannot be beat. I quote: "In reformatories, whether for old or young, the program for correction has been largely based upon the idea of physical force and the fear of its brutal consequences. In reformatories exist — greed, system, system, system. They are dehumanizing institutions where the individual is lost in the mass.

"The problem of the bad boy is not apart from the problem of life and all that that implies and it cannot be solved by those who do not understand the desires and aspirations of the human race."

That is all true. A reformatory helped make me bad. No one ever understood. Often I did things just for adventure. It was n't the "swag"— it was the fiction.

I 'm marking off parts in the book that is right. Also I 'm marking parts which relates to the boys' thoughts and feelings when arrested and sent away. If there ever was a reform school like the ideal one described, it would reform anybody.

You asked me to write the story of my life, so I 'll do it. I hope it helps the kids. It will, if some one reads it to them. I have n't much time; I 'll soon have to pay for the crime I 'm here for. The curtain will be dropped for me to get prepared. I 'll have to hustle so I can't give you many tips as to the real life in a reform school, but I 'll do my best.

I lived on the upper East Side of Harlem. My people were very poor and many times I went to bed hungry. My shoes were torn and sometimes I had no shoes. I eat bread given me by another boy. There was a man by the name of Leonard who had a flock of pigeons. I used to go on the roof to see him fly them, and I thought how I would like to have one. Finally, a woman named Simons, who had a nephew who had a few pigeons, asked me to

run an errand and she gave me a white pigeon. I was overjoyed. I had two friends and made them part owners. One boy took care of it. Our white pigeon had a wart on one eye and was n't very strong because of the handling we gave it. It got worse in health. One day when we had it on the roof and threw it in the air to attract other pigeons, it fell down a chimney and got covered with soot. Then we gave it a bath, and a woman who saw us felt sorrow and bought the pigeon for twelve cents. I shared the twelve cents with my two friends. Later the pigeon died and the woman let us bury it in the rear yard.

I was going to school at that time on and off, though I never had more than a few weeks' schoolin' altogether. Always after school I kept tryin' to catch a pigeon. I would put my handkerchief in my cap and fold my cap around the handkerchief and try to imitate a pigeon. I did this to coax other pigeons to me. One day my teacher bought me a suit of clothes and some shoes. I can remember that day. But the next day I was promoted and I lost my good teacher. I got a rough one instead, whom I did n't like and after that I played truant. When I was ten I stayed at home very little; I lived on the street.

At this time my mother moved downtown. I got acquainted with a boy named Eddie and went home less and less. Eddie and I used to steal pigeons, and that was the first time I stole. We stole common pigeons and put them in Eddie's backyard and he trained them. Eddie did n't have to steal, as he had money, but he liked to. After he got the pigeons trained, he called me in his yard to see the difference between good and common pigeons. His brother Charlie had good ones in his cellar, they are what is called "felights." I liked these pigeons better

than the ones Ed. had, so I stole the brother's pigeons by climbing over the fence in the night. I put them in an empty apartment next door to where my family lived. Then I let a boy named Joseph, partners in with me, on the pigeons. Joseph took them to his house. One day we took them on the roof and some of them got away. Then Joseph's step-mother cut the heads off the remaining pigeons and cooked them. I felt very bad, but I stole lots more. One night at 138th Street three of us boys went on a pigeon hunt. One of the boys lit a cigarette "butt" he found and a man saw the light in the rear yard where we were and caught us and had us arrested. That was my first arrest. I was scared. They took me to a police station. After a while a policeman beat me and let me go. That filled me with hate and I got a big stick, meaning to kill that man. Then I began to steal things to eat regularly. I broke into a fish store at 120th Street and Second Avenue. I didn't get anything, but I can remember even now finding a revolver. It was the first firearm I ever had. I've forgotten what I did with it. I remember stealing many things to eat all through my boyhood. Finally I got arrested and sent to the Gerry Society. But I got out of there and started right in to steal again. The fact is, I had to, to live. Then I got arrested and sent to a reformatory and there I learned my real crooked career. I learned burglary, and it became my ambition when I got out to steal and get nice clothes. Also my mind had been corrupted. At 14 years of age I had a rotten mind. I knew more immorality than most men know. In a reform school you get your first lessons in real stealing and you try it out, as soon as you are released. Then you get arrested and sent back. The book you gave me had the treatment in it, that a boy

receives at a reformatory and it does n't help him. After the Reformatory comes the House of Refuge. Here you are paroled when released. If caught breaking parole, you may get sent back until twenty-one. After the House of Refuge comes Elmira, then the next is Blackwell's Island, then Sing Sing and Auburn, and finally Dannemora Prison. Then you are a full fledged thief. You have no respect for any one. You lose God. You have no conscience, conscience is dead. You take revenge on society because society has taken revenge on you.

My present trouble came about from lack of food, despair, because deprived of things other men and boys had, from a desire to have decent clothes, not just clothes enough to cover me, and from the bad and immoral acts learned me by men and women when a boy. Many and many a time I was hungry. Many a time I was wet and cold. I had no way to dry my wet feet, but to wait until they dried. Then it would rain again, and again I must stay wet for hours. In the meantime I was knocked around and abused, morally and physically. When sent away it was the same — I was abused. You are made to lie, steal, and curse, and curse you can. You are made to distrust all people, you trust no one. The only law you know is the law of the underworld. You have to be always on your guard. You have to look out for the police, for citizens, for the people you are going to take advantage of, and for the stool pigeon. You have to be on your guard for what is termed "rats" (burglar alarm) and for dogs. You are nothing but a haunted and hunted beast of a man. You have no life. If you had gotten me and trusted me fully I don't think I'd have gone

back on you. I would n't have stolen unless you done something to test me out. Sometimes I 've stolen to give. Once I got in trouble because I stole to help a married man pay his rent. I've been arrested for stealing for the fun of stealing and for stealing because I had to steal to live, the court don't care which. God knows I 'm sick of it. I 'd like to help the kids. My kind of life only means heartache, torture, and disgrace. Remember that in every Reform School there is boys with good instincts as well as bad. Separate the good from the bad and put the bad little ones with older boys who are good. Then you will bring them around. At the House of the Good Shepherd, keep the girls sent there from home separated from the ones sent there for prostitution. You can work on both separately and make good. Above all, trust the kids and teach them to trust you.

I 'm sorry I can't get out to assist you in your work. I did n't suppose I 'd land here. I never thought they could put it over on me. I ain't an angel. There 're no two wings on me, but I don't murder an unarmed man in the dark; if I 'm out to kill I fight in the open. Sometimes it seems as though you have to kill, for the Law and the courts don't give a convict justice. What else is there to do with a stool-pigeon — a man who goes back on his pals?

As for a man who 's a convict getting justice in his own case, it ain't possible. Once have a record, even a reformatory record, and the police are after you for everything done in the neighborhood. It is easy to believe the Judge did n't like me when the first remark he passed was: "You have a bad face. You look like a criminal and the world would be better off without you." That

made me hot under the collar and I would n't talk to my lawyers, nor say a word at the trial, nor go on the stand. But gee — I did n't see what they had on me.

Well, I 've kept me word and wrote what I promised. I hope you get it O.K. It is n't what I 'd liked to have done, but the time was very short. It 's after four A. M. and me fingers is sore, but here I am still at it. I wrote since Sunday afternoon. I thank you for your kindness and all you did in my behalf. I know if a pardon could have been got, you would have gotten it. But don't worry for I 'm not of much use. It 's awful easy to aggravate me and sometimes I lose my head completely. Do you think it would be worth while to save me? Don't you see all the things I 've done? I 'm sorry, of course, but do you think that 's an excuse? Do you think that squares me for the way I have acted? You say, be brave. I 'll be that alright. I can't get over the Judge's telling you he thought I was afraid. No man likes being locked in this kind of a hell; but I 'm not a coward. I 'm glad you 're going to write to the papers the day I die, tellin' them you believe in me. Gee! how I would like to see that letter. You can bet I 'll prove the Judge a liar by dying brave.

Again I thank you for what you done. Good-by, and may God bless you and always be with you.

Yours in gratitude,

(Signed) JACK.

P. S. I wish you had gotten me when I was a kid, I 'd be a different man.

P. S. Don't feel bad — be of good heart and God bless you — farewell.

"HAPPY JACK."

During the few days between the trial and the execution I did everything in my power to secure a commutation of sentence, the changing of the death sentence to life imprisonment. I went to the Governor, but all in vain. The rehearing had been fair and when Judge and District Attorney oppose clemency, it is an unwritten law that none may be granted. I traveled back to the District Attorney. As I made my way to his office, an assistant attorney brushed against me laughing and held out an engraved card. It was an invitation to the execution. "Had one yet?" he inquired. I could only turn away, sick at heart. Here, too, my errand was a failure. What was left? Public opinion, the newspapers. Then began a weary round. I sought the leading dailies, only to be politely told they were n't interested. My story was n't news. The day Jack was executed they would print anything I wrote but not before. Never had I felt so helpless. A human life was at stake and I could n't make a ripple on the placid progress of affairs. Deep in my heart I knew the mother hearts would have understood and answered if I could have reached them. They would have seen what I saw. The

A boy's reformatory that is like a prison. One of the institutions which Happy Jack speaks of

awakening of a human soul, the need of permitting this awakened soul to render the service that was in him, before cleaning the slate.

As the time of execution drew near the stupidity of what society in its ignorance was doing weighed too heavily and I ran away. But before I left the State I sent a letter to every paper to be printed with the account of the execution. In it I told about the "Happy Jack" I knew. I spoke of his ability, his humanness, and said we should have used him. I pointed out that we let the diseased and degenerates live, but kill a young, forceful, intelligent, and virile man. And last I spoke of his courage. I declared he would die bravely, that he was not a coward. Was such confidence on a three weeks' acquaintance hazardous? I think not. Some things we know instinctively and surely. Each little act of "Happy Jack," however far wrong he may have gone, marked him a man.

On Monday, May 19, within an hour after he had finished his letter to me the end came. In the *Evening Journal* appeared the following headline:

SOCIETY'S MISFITS

"Happy Jack" Dies in Chair With a Smile — Woman Defends Him.

May 19th. "Happy Jack," convicted of the murder of Paddy B——, a saloon-keeper, went cheerily to death in the electric chair to-day. He was easily the most composed and pleasant victim that ever sat in the fatal chair.

He began his last short trip down the hall just eleven minutes before six o'clock. Fourteen men who had been condemned to the same sort of death were in the cells near him. The curtains had been drawn before their cells when Jack started but through the gloom there came his cheery voice, calling good-by to the remaining fourteen.

The Reverend Father attended him. As they walked together to the death chamber, Jack bore a crucifix. He heard the muffled reply that came from the death cells as he called good-by and stepped into the execution room at 5:49 o'clock. At 5:50 he was strapped in the chair. The current was switched on at 5:50 and left for one minute. The second and third shocks were not given and the body responded but once to the charge. Even then it found Jack wearing a smile. He came into the room smiling and his last words as he sat in the death chair were:

"Tell them I'm not afraid."

The warm days have come again and with them the anniversary of Happy Jack's execution, that moment when he was snuffed out like a candle. But out of that tragedy has come gladness when I journey back to the grim old prison. It is no longer with sadness, for in two short years a change has taken place — a change beyond be-

lief. Jack's life was not lived in vain. It was his story I took to George W. Kirchwey, then Dean of the Columbia Law School, and he, greatly stirred, went to Thomas Mott Osborne, already absorbed in prison problems. Through these men a New York State Prison Reform Commission was appointed with Mr. Osborne as chairman. The work that Mr. Osborne has since done has become an old story. His appointment as warden of Sing Sing, the establishment of the Mutual Welfare League and self-government is a tale famous from coast to coast. And through Mr. Osborne it was possible for me to get from the men in Sing Sing and Auburn prisons the story of their boyhood in reformatories, stories that have stirred woman's heart and brought ready help from every State in the Union. For a new spirit has awakened toward society's delinquents whose fullest expression is to be seen at Sing Sing. If you look over the high walls in the late afternoon on these warm summer days you will see men moving freely about and talking. Work is over and the men are playing baseball or tennis or gather in little groups discussing right and wrong. The pigeons that "Happy Jack" loved so well, that he shared even his

scanty prison food with them, hover low over the old buildings. A spirit of brotherhood and uprightness pervades the place. There is but one regret, that is that " Happy Jack " may not see it. But who knows, perhaps his released spirit has taken refuge in the breast of the nesting pigeons, who brood so serenely on the gray grim walls.

THE REFORMATORY THAT REFORMS

"NOBODY raised me, I just growed!" is the Topsy form of education. The reverse is institutionalism or suppression. In neither case is the result desirable. But last summer I found an institution that produces neither a Topsy nor institutionalized child, but a valuable citizen. This does not mean there are not other institutions doing excellent work. Between the evils of the worst, and the virtues of the best, lies a great gulf. Every State has at least one institution to be proud of, where earnest men and women with untiring zeal have wrought wonders. The grim, gray, walled-in reformatory with barred windows and cruel punishments had given place to a stretch of open country, dotted with gay cottages where kindly treatment prevails.

These model institutions have acres of rolling farm land, fresh green lawns, straight gravel paths, picturesque cottages, fluttering curtains,

immaculate white tablecloths and real china for the "kiddies." The effect is magnificent, one's heart swells with pride, this we say is America at its best. But these model institutions usually have one grave defect. It exists in the best hospitals as well as the best institutions. Doctors have discovered it. It is that shining, white, sterilized beds do not always cure curable patients. Why? Because the soul as well as the body needs treatment. Man has attempted by outer perfection to transform the spirit and it can't be done. When your boy rescues a bird from a snake, fights for fair play, protects his little sister, tries to serve the community, is wild with excitement over a new discovery, or creeps into mother's arms at night for love, these moments transform him and make him a man. These moments the institutional child rarely has. But I found a reformatory that had discovered the secret. It was by chance I stumbled upon it. I was in England, absorbed in the war. I had been talking democracy with a nephew of the Earl of Sandwich, when he said, "Visit our Little Commonwealth if you want to see real democracy." I opened my eyes wide. Earls and earls' sons and nephews don't usually go in for democ-

racy, but I accepted his invitation. He was chairman of the executive board. On the board of managers were such people as Earl Grey, the Duchess of Marlborough, the Earl of Sandwich [since this has been written the news has come of the death of the Earl of Sandwich], and many other notables.

I journeyed down to Dorchester. It was a warm summer's day, with patches of blue sky, gray clouds, and intense peace. War seemed an absurdity. Mr. Homer T. Lane, the superintendent of the Little Commonwealth, met me at the quaint English station with his motor-car. Mr. Lane, by the way, is an American, which may account for some of the democracy. At first I was absorbed in the scenery, the well-ordered farms, the thatched cottages, the serenity and routine of English country life, and I gave Mr. Lane scant attention. It was the motor-car roused me. It was feeling its way along the road like a thing alive. Suddenly as if tired of civilization it shot out across the fields with a little puff of contentment. It butted its nose against a gate and with a chug of conquest darted through. Then I looked at the driver. It was a disreputable old car all banged and scarred, but it was

human. It had as much spirit and character as an animal. I began to wonder about the man at the wheel, a man who could make even a Ford car human. Long before our destination was reached I knew that the children under his care would not be cogs in a machine. We climbed a hill and slid down another, in happy-go-lucky fashion, and turned into an open gate. There was no form of reception, no rows of children and a brass band. Visitors at the Commonwealth are a common occurrence: mothers, relatives, strangers, all are welcome, at all times. I saw a big farm dotted with cottages. Everywhere doors and windows were open. There were boys working in the fields, a girl in a doorway shaking a rug, and some tiny children playing on a lawn. Every now and then there were snatches of song and gay childish laughter, and everywhere the hum and buzz of voices. The place was alive — like the auto, it had meaning.

Presently, I and my bag were deposited at a cottage door. Some small girls surrounded me. One took me to a tiny room, her own turned over to me. The diminutive bed and chair made me feel a child again among children. That was the beauty of the place, you became one of the family.

Connie and two of her babies

I stayed for three days. I saw the "kiddies" in their every-day life; I figuratively looked under the beds, in all the cupboards, and searched the children's hearts and could find nothing wrong. The children paid little heed to me. They were busy with their own tasks, but they possessed true hospitality. They gave me my freedom. Even yet each child stands out as an individual. There was no herding together in a colorless institutional mass.

The children ranged in age from thirteen to seventeen. They were chiefly products of the London Children's Courts. They had been convicted of theft, assault, or had been in danger of becoming morally depraved. Some records were bad. Mr. Lane has a preference for a boy or girl whom the ordinary reformatory rejects. He believes in the theory that children with great enterprise for evil have equal capacity for good. He pointed to his three oldest girls and told their story. Each now occupies a position of honor as a cottage housekeeper. Their crimes had been shoplifting. At the time of arrest they were only fifteen. They were almost women in size and considered a menace. In court they were closely guarded by a matron and policemen. During

trial they had been in prison in the Women's Detention House. Mr. Lane was in court. His believing heart and understanding eyes discovered possibilities no one else saw. He asked that the delinquents be sent to the Commonwealth. The Judge hesitated. He thought the delinquents too wicked. At last he consented. Then Mr. Lane went to the girls. They were still closely guarded. "We won't need you any more," he said to the officials, "the girls are going with me." The matron and policemen were astounded. Surely Mr. Lane did n't know what dangerous characters he dealt with. Their apprehension changed to horror as he continued, turning to the girls: "Is there a taxi stand near? We will need a cab to go to the station." Three pairs of eyes looked at him squarely. "Sure, sir, we know where to get one," and they were off. In leisurely manner, with smiling good-bys, amidst gaping officials, Mr. Lane made his departure. At the street corner in quiet dignity stood the three girls with the taxi. At the station weeping relatives met the little group. "May we say good-by to our mothers?" asked the trio. "Certainly," was Mr. Lane's prompt answer. "Take your mothers in the waiting-

room, but fifteen minutes before train time meet me on the station platform." At the appointed hour the three weeping maidens appeared. They were desperately unhappy; they did n't want to go to a strange institution, but they had been trusted and they kept their trust.

The citizens of the Little Commonwealth are those whom society has dubbed "misfits." They are not a picked brand, unless choosing the hardest to control means a choice of the best. But where they come from or what their crimes these things are forgotten — the interest centers in what the children are.

HOME LIFE

The first thing that strikes one about the Commonwealth is its hominess. Many institutions have cottages, but not many are homelike. The Commonwealth cottages have all the earmarks. It was evident boys had sprawled in chairs and tramped about on the rugs. The fireplaces were black with usage; the books battered with handling, the graphaphone continually emitted a cheery sound, family life oozed from every corner of the buildings.

Two things created this home atmosphere.

One, the children owned the place. There was no routine or system, beyond that of the well-regulated family and there were big and little children and both sexes in every cottage.

The average cottage institution herds ten to twenty boys all of the same age in one building. Triplets is the utmost a normal family can manage. Even a cottage cannot make twenty boys, all fourteen, a natural family. There must be the big and the little, the girl and the boy, to create the relation of give and take, care and consideration that exists in home life.

The Little Commonwealth has met the need for tiny children, by adopting eight orphans all under seven, the youngest a baby of six months. These little creatures awaken the latent love of the old boys and girls. They satisfy the ache of the hungry heart. Babies are in demand in every cottage. It is a joyous sight when you step into the dining-room for dinner to see a cooing, friendly, curly-headed baby playing in its clothes basket. Not a boy or girl passes the baby without some term of endearment. These little creatures thrive on the love of their older brothers and sisters, but they are not spoiled. Their destiny is presided over by Mrs. Lane who

brings them up Montessori fashion. Moreover, each cottage has a grown up, who acts as house father or mother. These babies as soon as they can walk, like the other citizens, care for themselves. They have their tiny gardens and their daily tasks. Late one afternoon hearing gurgles and chuckles issuing from the bathroom in my cottage I entered. Some three- and four-year-old kiddies, unaided, were taking their bath. Quite unconscious of me, they continued their operations. When it came time to dress there was a hunt for clothes. The clothes were in a big cupboard. A small man of four could not find satisfactory garments. A glorified, naked little Eve of three undertook to assist. She got down on her hands and knees and crept into the cupboard. Meanwhile Stanley poised on two sturdy legs observed proceedings. Presently, Eve emerged triumphant with shirt and trousers that matched. I offered my services to Stanley but he was much more expert than I in arranging his garments, and Eve was far too capable to need any assistance.

Into such an atmosphere of hominess, kindliness, cheer, and love do the children come. Such

faith have Mr. and Mrs. Lane in the innate goodness of children and that environment can work wonders that their own children, a boy of eight, two little girls, and a boy of sixteen are members of the community. Like the others, they are citizens. They have no privileges but share equally in the work and the play.

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Next to the hominess, the most striking feature of the Commonwealth is the ability of the citizens. They are self-reliant, self-respecting, and full of initiative. They don't ask for help, they do things themselves. This comes from economic independence. For each citizen earns his own living. As soon as he or she arrives the first task is to secure employment. There is the carpentry work, the building of houses, equipment, repairs, plumbing, the farming, the planting and raising of vegetables, the care of the cattle, all these things are done by the boys. The housework, the cooking, cleaning, sewing, laundry work, care of the children, the keeping accounts, buying household supplies, making both ends meet, the running of the community store, these are the tasks

The citizens build the commonwealth cottages — a former judge at work

[redacted]

of the girls. The great novelty of it all is, that the citizens not only do the work, but conceive and plan it as well.

For all labor each child receives the current local rate of wages of from 6 to 7 cents an hour. The payment is made in token money, but when a citizen graduates, his savings are redeemed in regular currency. All departments are conducted on a strictly business basis. The citizen has the same problems to meet that confront him in the outside world. If he does n't give satisfaction he is discharged and must secure other employment.

The position of shopkeeper is in great demand. It may be held by a boy or girl. In the store are all needed supplies from food to clothing. A small girl was storekeeper during my visit. Except for the size of the proprietor, it might have been the shop of a thrifty French woman. There was an air of cheer, cleanliness, and compactness about it. The account books were beautifully neat. The cash register gathered in the aluminum money. This small person would have no difficulty in securing a similar position in the world at large.

Out of their earnings the children pay for

room, board, clothing, and every necessity and pleasure. There is no restriction on color, shape, or value of clothing. You may wear what you please provided you can afford it. There is equal latitude in the matter of accommodations. If dissatisfied with board in one cottage a citizen may move to another, if there is room. This is good for the housekeepers. It keeps up a standard. One day at lunch the cake was heavy. Criticisms came thick and fast. It was evident the baking must improve, or the housekeeper lose her position, or her boarders.

The inevitable question of course is, are there no laggards? The answer is, that constructive work that is paid for reduces that problem to a minimum. But once there was a little boy who rebelled. He flatly refused to lift his hand in any kind of labor. Day by day he grew more ragged and dirty. He was fed on the community leavings. At last his appearance became a disgrace and the citizens held a meeting. It was decided to tax each member and buy the boy a suit of clothes. One night the disreputable coat and trousers were burned and new ones left in their place. In the morning the small lad had no alternative but to wear what he found. Those

clothes were like a red-hot brand in the flesh. Each citizen made a tour of inspection. They had paid for the clothes and felt they had a right to inspect. He saw he was a pauper and a dependent. The disgrace ate into the boy's soul. In a day he was hard at work. The first money earned went to reimburse the community for his new suit. To-day there are rarely shirkers. The community resents being taxed to support a delinquent. Public disapprobation is the greatest punishment young shoulders can endure.

In such fashion are the problems worked out.

SELF-GOVERNMENT

Do not imagine the citizens are perfect. These children, like others, have their fits of passion, their tantrums, their days of bad behavior. But they are given the opportunity to learn self-control through experience. It is a self-governing community. From the first, the children have done their own thinking, made their own laws, and maintained discipline. When the Commonwealth started the children assembled to draw up the laws. Mr. Lane saw that all looked to him for guidance. They voted as he voted. He determined to teach them a lesson. Deliberately

he voted wrong on every question. The citizens followed suit. Soon they were in a frightful muddle. The leaders were in despair. They went to Mr. Lane in desperation. "Self-government won't work," they declared. Mr. Lane looked at them quietly. "The trouble is n't with self-government, but with you," he said. Then he told them what he had done and why, and ended with —"Now go back, make your own laws, do your own thinking, never depend on any one else." They went back. This time in a new spirit. Soon they had evolved wise rules of conduct. Children's laws suited to children's needs, not adult laws superimposed on children. That is the keynote — the great difference between the Commonwealth and all other junior republics. Other republics have adopted the bad as well as the good in society's laws. They have copied the grown-up system of revenge, punishment, and jails, and the attempt to create good behavior by fear. Not so the Commonwealth; its laws are the result of experience and have been worked out by trial and error. Mr. Lane has let his citizens go down a blind alley, find their mistakes, and return to the trail. As an example, one day when Mr. Lane started for the city, the boys asked

to make a bonfire. "Certainly," said Mr. Lane, "only be careful to do no damage." It was a gray day, and the wood was damp. The fire was a failure. The disappointment was keen. Then a bright boy spoke up: "I know how to make it burn; put on some gasoline." Down to the garage they trooped, and a bucket of gasoline was poured on the wood. It proved a huge success. Great was the delight. Bucket after bucket of gasoline disappeared in the flames. That night when Mr. Lane returned he asked: "Did you have a good bonfire?" "Great," was the answer in chorus. "How did you manage it?" asked Mr. Lane. "The wood was wet?" These children know no fear. There is no need for deception. Promptly they poured forth the story of the gasoline. Mr. Lane listened attentively. "Yes," he said, "gasoline makes a fine fire, but an expensive one." Bit by bit he worked out the amount used, the price per bucket, what it would cost each boy. Moment by moment the faces grew more dejected. The lads saw the savings of months vanishing. Then Mr. Lane ended with: "I want you boys to feel the place and everything on it is yours, but of course you must pay for what you use." That principle was al-

ready citizen law. Its justice was recognized. The boys accepted their fate without question and wrote this addition in the Statute Book. "If you use what you have n't paid for, you must make restitution with interest." They had learned a never to be forgotten lesson. No more gasoline was ever uselessly expended. The citizens' laws secure reformation by education rather than punishment.

But sometimes there is need of discipline. When there is, it is administered by the children through their court. Every Friday night court is held. In these proceedings the whole community takes part. Any one may give testimony. There is simplicity in the procedure, lacking in an ordinary court. It results in greater justice. Frequently the judge is a girl. This has come about naturally. It was discovered that girls make better judges than boys because more original. The verdict is, "Girls think up things to do to you and boys only fine." The first girl chosen objected. She said it was not the place for a woman. But the community knew better. They had listened to her wise remarks as a witness and they insisted. Her success was instantaneous. From that day the girls have made the

most popular judges. A small girl of fourteen acted as judge on the Friday night of my visit. Black-gowned judges would not have recognized the proceedings. The court was bound by no precedents. It was based on justice and common sense. A girl named Connie, aged fifteen, almost a woman in appearance, was brought before the court on the charge of swearing. After the indictment, there was a pause, then the Judge said: "How can I be sure what you said was swearing?" "Shall I tell you what it was?" volunteered Connie. "No," said the Judge hurriedly. "Some children may never have heard the words." Then after a moment of deep reflection and with utmost gravity: "I will appoint a committee of experts on swearing to hear you." Solemnly the two experts on swearing retired to listen to Connie. Gravely they returned and declared her language unfit for polite society. Again the Judge paused, then passed sentence.

"Connie, you must have your mouth washed with soap. You take care of the little children, and it 's bad of you to swear."

But from all parts of the room came murmurs and protests. It was evident the verdict was not

satisfactory. These citizens did not hesitate to criticize the bench. "What 's the matter?" inquired the Judge. Outflowed the following objections:

"We don't think the punishment a good one. Connie 's too big to have her mouth washed out. It would take four of us to do it. It would n't be dignified. It was all right in the early days of the Commonwealth, but we have passed that stage."

The Judge listened reflectively. She had no arrogance or false pride. "You 're right," she admitted; "I 'll change my sentence. Connie must stay in close bounds for three days." (Keep within the courtyard.)

In such fashion is justice administered. So simply, sweetly, fairly, and impersonally that the delinquent accepts his fate without murmur and bears no ill-will.

When the trial was over Connie came to me to whisper, "I only swear in my own room, never before the babies." I did n't need to look into her honest blue eyes to know this was so. Through her love for the little ones she was learning self-control. Fear had not purified her lips, but love was purifying both heart and lips.

REFORMATORY THAT REFORMS

One great feature of the Commonwealth is its absolute democracy. It is truly a government by all, for all. The Judge of Friday night may Saturday morning be working under and taking orders from the delinquent she sentenced the day before. No one holds an elevated position. If there are complaints against Mr. Lane they are brought before the court. When the Earl of Sandwich visits he too becomes a citizen. There are no distinctions, all are treated alike. While the citizens do not bow or curtsey and have no formal good manners, they have acquired something infinitely greater, good breeding.

COEDUCATION

One important phase of the Commonwealth not yet touched on is coeducation. This experiment was roundly denounced and opposed. It was declared impossible to bring delinquent boys and girls together without dire results. It could not be done. But Mr. Lane insisted. "Only when both sexes are together is life normal. You can't secure the family spirit without it," was his contention. Boys and girls, men and women, live together in society, they must learn to do so in the Commonwealth. Especially was the plan es-

sential, Mr. Lane felt, to the delinquent girl. Girls get into trouble through irregular relations. How teach right relations and behavior except by experience? To segregate boys and girls and then suddenly throw them together and expect good behavior, is like trying to teach piano playing without a piano. This truth is easy to see, but most of us have not the courage to carry it out. Mr. Lane had. Boys and girls were put together in a cottage. The first floor was made common to both. On the second the building was partitioned in the middle, on one side live the girls — on the other the boys. The citizens on their own initiative enacted the law that boys and girls should never trespass in each other's quarters. From the beginning Mr. Lane says there has been no sex problem. The checks and balances of normal life have created friendly, natural and wholesome relations.

Life in the Commonwealth is free and open, no one can be secretive. This does not mean that a particular girl has not cared for a particular boy. That has happened, but the romantic glamour has not lasted. Mary, adoring John, asks to sit next him at table. Now John unfortunately has atrocious table manners. He

gobbles his food and guzzles his soup and makes a fearful noise. In a few days the dream John vanishes. But with the departing thrill Mary learns a real lesson. She finds John, in spite of his manners, is honest and generous. A new value arises. These boys and girls learn to know one another with all their faults and all their virtues. If anything beyond friendship ever does develop, it will be love based on knowledge. What could be better? One hindrance to romance in youth, is that girls at maturity are much older than boys of the same age. Invariably the attitude of the older girls in the Commonwealth to the boys has been that of Big Sisters. So even with this vexing problem the Commonwealth has succeeded. Behavior is not always perfect, but the surprising thing is that the delinquent boy and girl in the Little Commonwealth are turning out as well or better than the average boy or girl of society.

RESULTS

It is the graduates that have clinched the success of the Commonwealth. In all other reformatories, even the best, the authorities feel that if a large per cent. of their children keep from crime,

"make good," they have succeeded. Not so the Commonwealth. It expects more than mere making good. Its citizens have learned how to work, how to play, how to love. They have learned self-control. They are good not only under orders, but in the free open world. They are expected to compete with and equal or surpass their fellows in society. Reports from all quarters show that they do. The Commonwealth is producing a superior brand. It is turning out the best cooks, the best soldiers, the best carpenters, the most capable citizens. A lieutenant at the front writes: "The boys of the Commonwealth are my best soldiers. They are efficient and thorough."

Said Lord Lytton one day, while talking about the citizens: "My only difficulty is to know what to do with the children, when they graduate. They are so fine it is difficult to find places good enough for them." And this was said of little waifs, strays, and pickpockets, gathered up from the streets of London.

WHAT WOMEN CAN DO

If the Commonwealth can produce such results let us steal its secret and multiply those

results throughout the United States. It is for the women to do this. Long ago there would have been many reformatories that reform if the mother half of the human race had had her hand in their shaping. I say advisedly the mother half, for women have been engaged in the work. But too often these women have been trained in man-made schools. In these schools the habits, customs, and systems of men have been superimposed on women. They have been taught to act according to routine, to be impersonal and abstract. The humanness, mother love, mother-craft, has been crushed out. Only in a few instances where men like Mr. Lane or Thomas Mott Osborne have arisen, has the spirit of motherhood survived, and because these men possessed the woman's as well as the man's point of view, the world has dubbed them sentimentalists. But that mother point of view is important. It must not be crushed out. Women have n't spent generations in the nursery for naught. They have treasures to give as great as man's. Every honest man knows it. He rejoices in a co-worker when she expresses herself, her womanhood, in her work, and is not a poor imitation of him. Whether it be in law, medicine, politics, reform-

atories, or the home, woman is needed, needed because she is different from man. That is the great reason for suffrage. The home is pointed to as the best that society has to offer. If it is, it is because it is the joint expression of man and woman.

If children are taken out of the homes, women must follow them into the institutions and express their mothercraft there. Let man and woman work shoulder to shoulder. Let him build his buildings, instal his new plumbing, invent his labor-saving laundry machine, but when he attempts to raise children by the same business methods and make them merely cogs in a machine, it is time woman stepped in. She knows that girls are not taught cooking by steaming masses of food in unwieldy vats. That boys are not taught honesty and courage by a system of silence and suppression. It is for her to see that no child goes unkissed or untucked to bed. That the spirit, as well as the body, is cared for, for only the kernel nourishes. She must go hammering at the doors of even the best institutions, and demand that the spiritual beauty be made to coördinate with the outer perfection. If the institutions bound by a system of routine and

red tape refuse her admittance, there are other ways of winning the battle. Let men and women form small committees, rent a cottage, create a diminutive Commonwealth, and show to their city and State what can be done, when man with his strength and woman with her mothercraft combine to make a reformatory that reforms. Not long will the old institutions withstand such an attack. Their doors will soon sag on their hinges, their corridors be empty, for no judge or jury or public will consent to consign a child to their soul-warping halls.

My call then is to women, for the men will readily follow. Remember the world's children are your children. Your mothercraft belongs to each tiny soul that with outstretched baby hands pleads to you for protection.

THE END