

# Prison Reform

(By Professor Coleman Phillipson.)

In my last article in "The News" I pointed out the general grounds and objects of criminal punishment, and the principles which, in my opinion, should guide the administrative authorities of a progressive nation in imposing the penalty of imprisonment on offenders. I have already said, and in order to prevent misunderstanding I now repeat, that it is far from my mind to treat social malefactors as though they were hotel guests, and to regard punishment as anything but a very unpleasant process and experience. Punishment should and must be unpleasant, but it need not be inhuman, savage, or in excess of what is sufficient and adequate for attaining the necessary object—a duly balanced and rationally adjusted compound of retributive, deterrent, preventive, and reformatory ingredients.

### Reformatory Devices

In order to ameliorate the lot of prisoners and to promote their chances for rehabilitation, various devices have from time to time been adopted, especially in the earlier stages of the application of the reformation principle. For example, the system of giving material rewards for good behavior has been tried in several countries, but without success. Another method was discharge by good conduct. This was first tried in Auburn Prison (New York) in 1817, and was adopted, with excellent results, in 1840-1860 by Capt. Maconochie in Tasmania, and by Sir Walter Crofton in Ireland. The practice might with benefit be applied increasingly at present, in the case of certain classes of prisoners whose behavior and disposition have given the authorities concerned confidence in them and reasonable belief that they would return to society as useful and law-abiding citizens. The South Australian Government recently adopted this practice in the case of W—. I had observed him and talked with him at Yatala Labor Prison, and came to the conclusion that the continuance of his long sentence could really serve no useful purpose. By releasing him the Government showed a humane disposition as well as a fine progressive spirit. A merciful and magnanimous pardon in a deserving case redounds to the honor of the administration, is an example for good to the community at large, and to the person pardoned is a great incentive to complete and permanent rehabilitation.

### Training System

Another plan adopted to effect a reformation of prisoners is the bringing to bear on them of religious influence, through the instrumentality not, as originally, of the prison authorities themselves, but of independent chaplains and missionaries. Efforts of this kind generally failed, when prison life meant solitary confinement and useless demoralising toil; but they are a valuable adjunct to the more enlightened modern prison curriculum. It has taken a long time for society to realise that training, physical and industrial, and general instruction of prisoners, are absolutely indispensable, if the prison system is to be productive of good, and is to justify the enormous expenditure on it. Nothing is more stimulating and salutary to a man who, once a parasite of society, comes to recognise that he can do work which is valued and paid for, and which can be the means of his restoration to a self-supporting and honorable position among his fellow-creatures. Several

trades are taught at Yatala, and the work turned out is excellent, despite the present inadequate accommodation. But in a country like Australia, agricultural pursuits are more important than manufacturing occupations; and, in my opinion, the establishment of a great prison farm in South Australia would be, as it has proved in other States, an excellent innovation, and would undoubtedly produce a better return than any manufacturing enterprises that can here be embarked upon. An institution of this kind, too, would not only be intrinsically profitable in a financial sense and in supplying wholesome out-of-door activities to the prisoners, but would also be a means of developing the agricultural resources and potentialities of this State, and so preventing or mitigating the exodus of people from the country into the towns—an exodus that is a greater danger to the community than many people realise.

### Honor and Self-Government

In any case—either in the present conditions or in a prison farm—the honor system supplemented by a certain measure of self-government on the part of the prisoners could with advantage be introduced, at least among the best and most promising sections of the prison population. No one, not even the most uncompromising conservative in regard to penal questions, or the severest advocate of the old regime, would deny that it would be of the greatest benefit to all of us if a sense of responsibility, trustfulness, honor, and loyalty could be inculcated in prisoners. And one of the best means of bringing this about is by showing more trustfulness and confidence in them, giving them liberty to associate for games, meals, concerts, lectures, debates, and other activities that may be conducted on a communal basis, and generally by imparting a freer and more generous spirit to the usually oppressive and deadening atmosphere of gaol and prison. The whole community or class or section of prisoners, as the case may be, would be interested in and concerned about the good behavior of every member of it. Various privileges, liberties, or concessions would be conferred on this or that prisoner, on his giving his word of honor that he would behave in a fair and sportsmanlike manner, and show himself worthy of the trust reposed in him. This method has been tried, with some success, at Auburn and Sing Sing Prisons in the United States, but it appears that there have been many failures. These failures were due to using the honor system among prisoners indiscriminately. But prisoners differ vastly—some are gentle and innocent compared to the hardened criminals. Hence discrimination is essential. My next article, therefore, will deal with the classification of prisoners.

*Register*  
29 DEC 1923

### ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION.

**ADDRESS BY MRS. DE CASTRO.**  
A representative meeting of the Adelaide branch of the English-Speaking Union was held at the Lord Mayor's parlour, Adelaide Town Hall, on Tuesday afternoon, and presided over by the Lord Mayor (Mr. C. R. J. Glover).  
The Chairman welcomed Mrs. de Castro, the hon. commission of the English-Speaking Union, who was visiting different States. He was pleased to be identified with such a movement.  
Mrs. de Castro, in outlining the objects of the union, said those included a mutual increase of knowledge among the English-speaking peoples. The union had nothing to do with Governments, and with formal alliances, but tried only to promote an understanding among the democracy of nations which spoke English. Great Britain and America had been at peace with each other for 100 years, and that was a bright indication for the future of the movement.  
The Rev. S. C. Myers said that such a movement was of great importance at the present time. It could not do otherwise than promote goodwill and peace

among mankind. He felt that the happiness and wellbeing of the world were largely wrapped up in the English-speaking peoples, and if they could promote the unity of such great nations it would be for the good of all humanity, as the union would ultimately mean the alliance of other nations, who had similar ideals.

At the instance of Sir Langdon Bonython, Mrs. de Castro was heartily thanked for her work. It was felt by the meeting that no mission of trust had been more successful than that undertaken by her. Her work was being done in an honorary capacity.

Officers elected:—Patrons, the Chief Justice (Sir George Murray), the Premier (Sir Henry Barwell), the Lord Mayor of Adelaide (Mr. C. R. J. Glover), President, Mr. Justice Angus Parsons; Vice-President, Sir Langdon Bonython; Hon. Vice-Presidents, Sir Richard Butler, Sir William Sowden, Sir Sidney Kidman, Sir George Brookman, Sir Lancelot Stirling, the Right Rev. Dr. Thomas (Bishop of Adelaide), the Most Rev. Dr. Spence (Archbishop), the Hons. G. R. Laffer (Commissioner of Crown Lands), D. J. Gordon, P. McM. Glynn, K.C., and W. Morrow, R.P.; Duncan-Hughes, Messrs. Birrell and Hudd, M.P's., Brig. Generals S. Price Weir and R. L. Leane, Col. C. P. Butler, Professors Mitchell and H. Darnley Naylor, the Revs. G. H. Wright, L. C. Parkin, I. A. Bernstein, J. G. Jenkins, J. K. F. Bickersteth, F. Shannon, Dr. J. A. Seymour, Dr. H. T. Postle, S. C. Myers, F. Lade, Messrs. H. H. Balch (American Consul), E. Kyffin Thomas, T. Barr Smith, C. R. Cudmore, W. A. Webb, G. McEwin, N. J. Kitto, W. B. Wilkinson, James McGuire, E. A. Clarkson, J. E. Davidson, J. H. Vaughan, Lavington Bonython, Stow Smith and W. R. Bayly; Mrs. C. R. J. Glover (Lady Mayoress), Lady Barwell, Lady Kidman, Mesdames T. Barr Smith, Ernest Good, Colin Duncan, T. R. Bowman, J. C. F. Slane and Balch, and Miss Muriel Farr; Executive Committee, Messrs Webb, Glynn, Balch, McEwin and H. V. S. Carey, Mesdames Glover, G. M. Coghill, Slane, Good and Balch; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. J. T. Massey.

*Herald*  
20 DEC 1923

### MR. JAMES McCABE, L.T.B.

Among those who received the degree of Bachelor of Laws on Wednesday, at Adelaide University was Mr. James



McCabe, son of Mr. Frank McCabe, secretary of the Federated Storemen and Packers Union.  
Mr. McCabe, jun. was a member of a team of debaters which represented Adelaide University and won the championship of all Australian Universities in August last.  
In 1921 he won the South Australian Societies' prepared speech, and this year gained second prize for the six best speeches of the year at the University Law Students Society. A member of St. Andrew's Literary Society, he has debated for that body on several occasions. Mr. McCabe was also a member of the Ministry in the University Parliament 1921 and 1922. He is a delegate to the Council of the Australian Labor Party, and is secretary of the Goodwood Local Committee. A forceful and eloquent speaker, with a pleasing personality, Mr. J. McCabe should be an asset to the Labor Party at the coming State elections.

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Mr. R. J. Coombe,  
who has been admitted as a practitioner of the Supreme Court of South Australia.

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### ASPECTS OF EDUCATION.

### LATIN, ENGLISH, AND DRUDGERY.

### PROFESSOR DARNLEY NAYLOR OUTSPOKEN.

Much food for thought on educational matters was provided by Professor Darnley Naylor in an address at the annual speech night of the Scotch College on Wednesday. He deplored the lack of Latin teaching, the use of slipshod English, and attacked certain methods of modern educationalists.

Speaking at the annual speech night of the Scotch College, held at the Under City Hall on Wednesday, Professor Darnley Naylor referred to several matters of educational interest, and made some outspoken utterances. He said he approached with hesitation the new methods of education. At the risk of being considered old fashioned he wished to refer to the teaching of Latin, even as one who represented a dying cause. Nothing that was worth doing was achieved without drudgery. Those who did not learn at school to submit to a little drudgery would have to learn to do so in after life sooner or later, and it was best to do so in the first place. There was not an occupation or a profession where there was no drudgery involved. The reward of drudgery was the ultimate result in the finished work. It had been said that Latin was "horridly" uninteresting, but if it were found dull in his opinion the fault lay with the teacher. Surely it was worth while to learn something of the civilisation of a nation which knew the meaning of government and discipline as no other nation had since known it, and had left a heritage which was the basis of our fine legal system, besides being the medium of our moral teaching. Those were things which could not be lightly set aside. Modern educationalists were possessed of the notion that the child had no imagination. If ever there was a period when there was imagination it was in the days of childhood. Modern educationalists seemed to think that when the child was old of a river it was necessary that they could be presented to his view a scene