

STATEMENT BY THE PRISON COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

ACTION WHICH HAS BEEN TAKEN UP TO JANUARY 1898 TO CARRY OUT THE RECOMMENDATIONS

IN THE

REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON PRISONS, 1895.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



LONDON:

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By DARLING & SON, LTD., 1-3, GREAT ST. THOMAS APOSTLE, E.C.

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1898.

[C. 8790.] Price 2½d.

STATEMENT by the Prison Commissioners of the steps which have been taken up to January 1898 to carry out the Recommendations in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Prisons. (C. 7702, 1895.) [*This Statement includes the information contained in the Paper showing the steps which had been taken up to the 27th February 1896. (C. 7996, 1896.)*]

The Recommendations are numbered as in the Summary of the Committee's Recommendations contained in Paragraph 126 of their Report.

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>I. That there should be a larger margin of separate cell accommodation in the London and certain of the provincial prisons (paragraph 31).</p>	<p>There is now a larger margin of separate cell accommodation in the London prisons consequent on penal servitude prisoners not being kept in London to serve nine months' separate confinement, and a proposal is under consideration for still further increasing the margin of separate cell accommodation in the Metropolis. As regards provincial prisons, a good margin of separate cell accommodation has also been secured by the system of removing prisoners when the number of unoccupied cells falls below the number fixed by the Commissioners. Committals have also, in some places, been changed in order to lessen the pressure on the accommodation.</p>
<p>That a speedier method of transfer be adopted (paragraph 31).</p>	<p>This recommendation has been carried out.</p>
<p>That prisoners should never be associated on reception or during confinement except for medical reasons and on the express order of the Medical Officer (paragraph 31).</p>	<p>This is the rule, and the Commissioners are satisfied that it is strictly carried out. Prisoners who are ordered for medical reasons to be in association are admitted to hospital, or if the hospital is fully occupied they are placed in large rooms under the personal supervision of an officer or paid attendant.</p>
<p>II. That in applying the regulations dealing with visits to, and communications with prisoners a larger discretion should be entrusted to Visiting Committees (paragraph 32).</p>	<p>A rule by the Secretary of State provides that the Visiting Committee may, in any case of special importance, or urgency, allow a prisoner an additional visit or letter or prolong the period of a visit (Rule 23).</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>II. That a detailed report should be obtained on the nature and working of the prisoners' Aid Societies, upon which a scheme might be drawn up for better organisation and supervision. This scheme should give greater facilities to the representatives of the Societies for seeing prisoners before discharge. That the Government grant should be increased and extended to Establishments conducted on approved methods for the treating of discharged prisoners (paragraphs 34 to 36).</p>	<p>The power of Governors to allow a prisoner to write or receive a special letter under special circumstances has also been extended.</p> <p>The Rev. G. P. Merrick, Chaplain of Holloway prison, a recognised authority on these questions, has made a searching inquiry into this subject, and has submitted a comprehensive and exact report* on the existing system in local prisons, and his suggestions for its improvement have afforded the Commissioners the opportunity of submitting a scheme for the future organisation of Aid Societies throughout the country, with a view to developing their effectiveness towards the end for which they were created, viz., the reinstatement in honest life of men and women on release from prison, and where a helping hand, or even a kindly encouragement on discharge may save from a relapse into crime. The scheme, which has now received the sanction of the Secretary of State and the Treasury, has been embodied in the following letter dated the 12th October 1897, which has been addressed to the Chairmen of all Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies throughout the country :—</p> <p>“ It will be remembered that the Departmental Committee on Prisons appointed by Mr. Asquith in 1894, while laying great importance on the valuable work done by Voluntary Societies throughout the country in the aid of discharged prisoners, at the same time called attention to the great and unnecessary variation in the methods of the working of these Societies, and reported that ‘ it does not appear that there is either uniformity of action under definite principles, or that the various Societies are so far organised as a whole that the effect of aid can be satisfactorily ascertained,’ and they advised that some competent person should be deputed to visit every prison and to report on the whole subject with a view to a scheme being drawn up for the purpose of the better organisation of these Societies.</p> <p>“ It was in consequence of their recommendation that, as you are aware, Mr. Merrick has recently conducted a most careful and exact inquiry into the methods of each Society, and his Report is in your possession.”</p> <p>“ The Commissioners have given their most earnest attention to the whole of the questions raised in Mr. Merrick's Report; and they desire now to submit a Scheme, which has received the sanction of the Secretary of State and the Treasury, based upon that Report, for the future regulation of Aid Societies in England and Wales.</p> <p>“ In suggesting these Rules of Procedure for the guidance of Societies it must be distinctly</p>

* This Report was presented to Parliament. (Paper C. 8299, 1896.)

Recommendations.	Action taken.
	<p>“ understood that it is not the desire or the “ intention of the Commissioners to coerce or “ interfere with the free liberty of action of “ Societies which are of course only subject to “ official control so far as they may draw a subsidy “ from public funds. The central authority has “ opportunities not possessed by individual so- “ cieties of collating information as to the methods “ and working of all Societies; and, upon the “ knowledge thus obtained, of forming an opinion “ as to what are, on the whole, the methods most “ likely to succeed in attaining the objects which “ the Societies and the Government have in view. “ Uniformity of procedure does not necessarily “ connote official control. As there has been in “ the past, so there must be in the future official “ control to this extent, viz :—that it is the duty “ of the Government to satisfy itself in all cases “ where there is a grant, however small, from “ public funds, that the grant is expended in a “ proper and effectual way on the object for “ which it is designed. The Commissioners are, “ on the one hand, the trustees for the Govern- “ ment grant, and on the other, the responsible “ authorities for carrying out the sentences of “ the law, and, though their strict duty ends when “ the prisoner has purged his crime, and left the “ Prison Gate, common humanity demands that “ some care shall be bestowed by the State on the “ discharged prisoner, both in order to relieve his “ immediate necessities, and to make his re-entry “ into honest life possible and less difficult. It “ is in the fulfilment of this latter duty that they “ have in the past been able to avail themselves “ of the assistance, warmly proffered and grate- “ fully accepted, and in very many cases zealously “ and effectually rendered, of certified Societies “ for the Aid of Discharged Prisoners. These “ Societies now form a network of charitable and “ philanthropic effort spread throughout the “ country and working in connection with each “ prison. Their work, though due to private “ initiation, and mainly supported by private “ subscriptions, has nevertheless such public “ importance and value, that it is becoming more “ the duty and concern of the Government, not “ indeed to fetter and harass their free and inde- “ pendent action by the imposition of binding “ official rules and regulations, but to encourage “ and stimulate their efforts, to offer direction and “ guidance, and it is in this spirit, and not with “ any desire to override or control the free play “ of benevolent action, that the Commissioners “ desire to suggest, for the guidance of each “ Society, the methods which, as a result of Mr. “ Merrick’s wide enquiry and their own experi- “ ence, they believe to be the most effectual, and “ they feel sure that each Society will accept “ these suggestions in the spirit in which they “ are offered, and will state freely and unreserv- “ edly any objections that may be entertained, so “ that before laying them down as the guide for “ the future, the Secretary of State and the “ Commissioners may feel that they have entire “ approval and support, even if in every individual “ case it is not possible to give literal effect to “ them.</p> <p>“ THE SCHEME IS AS FOLLOWS :—</p> <p>“ (1) There shall be a registration of Aid “ Societies at the office of the Prison Com- “ missioners who will furnish the Secretary of “ State with a Certificate that the Society is</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
	<p>“ properly constituted and efficiently organised, “ which shall continue in force until, for any “ reason, the Secretary of State shall think fit to “ withdraw it. In recommending the grant of a “ Certificate, the Commissioners will have regard “ to the fact whether monthly meetings of the “ Committee have been held ; whether arrange- “ ments have been made by the appointment of a “ Sub-Committee or otherwise to visit the Prison “ once a week in order to deal with the short “ time and other emergency cases, and whether “ an annual public meeting has been held.</p> <p>“ (2) The Society on receipt of such Certificate “ will be entitled to a grant from public funds on “ the following conditions :—</p> <p>“ (a) It shall not, in any case, with the “ money accruing from prison charities, “ exceed an amount calculated at 2<i>l.</i> 10<i>s.</i> per “ 100 prisoners discharged.</p> <p>“ By the phrase ‘ money accruing from “ ‘ prison charities ’ is meant such money, “ proceeding from a charitable fund in any “ particular locality <i>as is actually received and</i> “ <i>applied directly</i> for the benefit of prisoners “ discharged from the Prison or Prisons of “ that locality either through the certified “ Aid Society or the Trustees of the Charity. “ When any portion of such a Charity is “ applied under the conditions of the Trust “ to purposes other than the benefit of dis- “ charged prisoners, such portion will not be “ taken into account in reckoning the amount “ due from the Government under conditions “ (a) and (b).</p> <p>“ (b) It shall not in any case exceed the “ amount raised by private subscriptions.</p> <p>“ (c) That there be an annual report of the “ Society, a copy of which shall be sent “ annually to the Commissioners, which shall “ contain the result of aid given as per form “ herewith marked A, and a statement of “ accounts as per form herewith marked B.</p> <p>“ (d) That the Governor shall be afforded “ an opportunity of acquainting the Society “ with his views on all cases.</p> <p>“ (e) That the quarterly claim for repay- “ ment shall be accompanied with a certificate “ from the Secretary of the Society that “ the money has been expended for the “ benefit of the prisoners, and the Governor “ will initial the quarterly claim to indicate “ that the rules have been complied with.</p> <p>“ (f) That the Society will, if required, “ take charge of the money paid by way of “ gratuity to prisoners, including that paid to “ convicts, who may reside in their district “ or be committed to their care.</p> <p>“ (3) In case an Aid Society (a) is not in exist- “ ence at any prison ; (b) is not working efficiently “ in the opinion of the Commissioners, the Secre- “ tary of State may take steps for expending “ through the Authorities of the Prison such “ portion of the grant as the Prison would be “ entitled to at the rate of 6<i>d.</i> per head of the “ annual discharges of that prison.</p> <p>“ Such being the conditions according to which “ the annual grant from public funds will be “ made, the Commissioners think it desirable “ that the attention of Societies should be called “ to the recommendations contained in Mr. “ Merrick’s Report, and to the following in par- “ ticular, as upon their adoption, as far as possible,</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
	<p>“ the efficiency of any Society will, in the opinion “ of the Commissioners, largely depend.</p> <p>“ (1) That the Governor and Chaplain should, “ in all cases, be members of the Committee, and “ should act with, or as a Sub-Committee under “ the larger body, for the purpose of dealing with “ small cases, and those under short sentences.</p> <p>“ (2) That the visiting Committee should, if “ possible, in all cases be members of the Dis- “ charged Prisoners' Aid Society, and take an “ active share in its management, <i>especially in</i> “ <i>cases where they are also Trustees of the Prison</i> “ <i>Charity.</i></p> <p>“ (3) That a Sub-Committee of ladies be “ appointed for the assistance of female prisoners, “ and that they act under instructions which will “ be prescribed for them by the Commissioners.</p> <p>“ (4) That for both male and female prisoners, “ Agents should be appointed in all cases, whose “ duties shall be generally as follows :—</p> <p>“ (a) He or she shall visit the prison as “ ordered by the Honorary Secretary to take “ instructions as to dealing with cases selected “ for aid.</p> <p>“ (b) He or she shall, acting under the “ authority of the Governor, visit the prisoner “ in his or her cell, if desirable, with the “ view of making arrangements for his or her “ care on release.</p> <p>“ (c) He or she shall, at the discretion of “ the Sub-Committee, take charge of gratuities “ less than 2s. 6d., and expend them to the “ benefit of the prisoners.</p> <p>“ (d) It shall be his or her principal duty “ to find employment for prisoners, and for “ this purpose he or she shall visit employers “ of labour, take every opportunity of seeing “ and becoming personally acquainted with “ foremen and other officials on works, “ explaining to them the object of the “ Society, and endeavouring to secure their “ co-operation.</p> <p>“ (e) He or she shall draw up a list of “ respectable lodgings in which to place cases “ when necessity or convenience demands it, “ and provide for the board and lodging of “ prisoners for a limited time pending inquiry “ for work.</p> <p>“ (f) He or she shall visit constantly all “ persons under the care of the Society, as “ long as they are unemployed, and even “ after employment is found, if thought “ necessary.</p> <p>“ (g) He or she shall, if available, accom- “ pany prisoners to the Railway Station and “ see them off.</p> <p>“ (5) That the Society should establish relations “ with any Labour Homes or Institutions for men “ and women that may exist in the county or “ district, and shall arrange for the charge of “ cases by payment of a capitation grant.</p> <p>“ (6) That the Society shall appoint corre- “ sponding members or committees, <i>e.g.</i> Clergy- “ men, Police Officers, private individuals (male “ and female) in districts remote from the Prison “ with the object of (a) paying gratuities, “ (b) following up a case; (c) securing care “ and superintendence in a deserving case; “ (d) furnishing information with a view to “ employment.</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
	<p>“(7) That the Society should take charge of all gratuities and arrange for their disbursement in a manner most advantageous to the prisoner, and calculated to prevent the immediate and useless dissipation of the money. Payments of cash in lump sums should, as far as possible, be avoided, and receipts should for all cases be taken for the aid which has been given. Payments by instalments and through the Agencies described in (6) will be preferred, and when necessary payments in kind by the purchase of clothes or materials, according to the needs of each case.</p> <p>“(8) That the Society should allow other benevolent Societies or persons desirous of assisting discharged prisoners to make arrangements for so doing, subject to its approval and control, and subject to the suggestions contained in the Circular of 6th January, 1894, which is as follows :—</p> <p>“As applications are occasionally received from philanthropic agencies, or individuals, acting independently of the Discharged Prisoners’ Aid Society connected with each prison, asking that general facilities may be given to them for communicating with prisoners for the purpose of helping them after discharge, I am directed by the Commissioners of Prisons to inform you of the course they have pursued, and propose to continue, with reference to such applications.</p> <p>“The Commissioners feel that while no doubt it is right that advantage should be taken of every opportunity of giving judicious aid to prisoners on discharge, it is not at all desirable, on many grounds, that there should be any competition among the agencies which desire to assist in doing so, for experience has shown, as might be expected, that the effect of any such competition is far from being good upon the prisoners themselves.</p> <p>“Whenever, therefore, such applications have been made to them, the Commissioners have adopted the course of referring the applicants to the Discharged Prisoners’ Aid Society which has been constituted for the prison concerned, leaving that Society to decide on accepting the assistance offered, or otherwise. If the assistance of such other agency, or individual, is desirable, or necessary, and it would work under, and in concert with, the Discharged Prisoners’ Aid Society, and not in competition with it, such assistance would no doubt be accepted by the Discharged Prisoners’ Aid Society, in order that it might be turned to the best account. If, on the other hand, the Discharged Prisoners’ Aid Society does not think it necessary to accept the assistance proffered it would inform the applicants accordingly, so that their philanthropic services may be devoted to purposes which are more in need of their assistance.</p> <p>“(9) That the Societies should co-operate with each other by mutual arrangement, in taking charge of cases coming from districts other than their own; especially of the juveniles whose sentences are in excess of one month and who, under the new order, are transferred</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>IV. That No. 1 dietary punishment should only be inflicted when no other sufficient substitute is to be found (paragraph 40). That after confinement in a punishment cell for 14 days an interval of at least three days should elapse before further punishment of the same kind is inflicted (paragraph 40).</p>	<p>“ to collecting or district prisons, and who thus “ by being moved out of their own localities “ might suffer by being deprived of local interest “ in their case.</p> <p>“(10) That all prisoners, irrespective of the “ length of their sentences, should be deemed “ eligible for assistance, provided that (in other “ respects) they are worthy of the consideration “ of the Society.</p> <p>“ It is proposed that the scheme shall come into “ into effect as from the 1st April, 1898, and in the “ meantime the Commissioners would be glad to “ receive any observations that the Societies may “ desire to offer upon the Scheme in whole or in “ part.</p> <p>“ (Signed) E. RUGGLES-BRISE.”</p> <p>This is the order of the Commissioners, and they are satisfied that it is strictly observed.</p> <p>No rule of the kind has been necessary, for the reason that at the time of the passing of the Prison Act a punishment cell was completely dark, and the absolute darkness was the punishment involved by confinement in it. Such cells have long been disused, and the so-called punishment cell is in fact only an ordinary strong cell. The use of the term “punishment cell” is misleading, and creates a false impression in the public mind. As a rule it is possible to punish ill-conducted and idle prisoners by close confinement in their own cells, but it will be necessary to provide special cells for the confinement of refractory and violent prisoners, to prevent their breaking out or injuring themselves. Such cells will be only extra strong ordinary cells properly lighted with double unbreakable windows, and confinement in them will not in itself be any punishment. It is proposed by Clause 6 of the New Prison Bill that it shall not be necessary to provide or appropriate punishment cells for the confinement of prisoners for prison offences, but that special cells shall be provided for the temporary confinement of refractory or violent prisoners. Subject to sufficient diet, exercise, &c. and the supervision of the Medical Officer, there is no physical danger in detention for a lengthened period in a “refractory cell.” The only alternative in the case of a violent prisoner consists in the use of hand-cuffs or other means of restraint which are not only more severe in their nature, but to the use of which the public sentiment is strongly opposed, and to which it is not, in the Commissioners’ opinion, desirable</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>That the further term only be given with the sanction of the Medical Officer (paragraph 40).</p>	<p>to have recourse, except in cases of the most extreme necessity.</p> <p>No punishment of any kind is ever inflicted without the previous sanction of the Medical Officer. This is specially provided for both by Rule (194) and Standing Order.</p>
<p>Paragraph 40. Means should be adopted to cancel the remainder of sentence to detention in punishment cell in case of a prisoner who expresses contrition, and whose contumacy the Governor considers to be ended.</p>	<p>Governors are required to bring such cases before the Visiting Committee, who have the power to revise their own sentences.</p>
<p>Paragraph 41. The system in force in convict prisons of entering on a report sheet the reports against prisoners and the investigations and punishments awarded, and of sending the report sheets to the Home Office weekly for review should be adopted in local prisons.</p>	<p>This recommendation has been carried out since December 1895.</p>
<p>V. That prisoners should not forfeit marks by reason of physical or mental weakness or illness (paragraph 43).</p>	<p>Marks for remission of sentence not earned by industry in consequence of physical or mental weakness or illness are granted in every case where it is certified by the Medical Officer that the illness or weakness was actual and not feigned.</p>
<p>That power to earn remission of sentences should be extended to Local Prisons (paragraph 44).</p>	<p>The Commissioners see no reason why the power of earning partial remission of sentence should not be extended to prisoners under sentences of imprisonment. That power is not only a great incentive to industry and good conduct to the individual prisoner, but, in the administration of convict prisons, where prisoners are in association, it has been proved to be a considerable factor in the maintenance of good order. Provision is made by Clause 7 of the New Prisons Bill, for enabling a prisoner sentenced to imprisonment for a term exceeding nine months to earn by special industry and good conduct a remission of a portion of his term of imprisonment not exceeding one-fourth of the period remaining after he has served nine months.</p>
<p>VI. That unproductive labour should be abolished wherever possible (paragraph 47).</p>	<p>This has been done as far as possible. Unproductive cranks have been abolished in nearly all the prisons and the tread-wheel is being utilised for productive</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>That association for productive work and technical instruction be extended gradually and with due caution throughout the prisons (paragraph 55).</p>	<p>labour. Oakum picking by females has been wholly discontinued, and a very marked diminution in the number of male oakum pickers has also been effected. Their reduction to a minimum will be kept steadily in view. Industries of a more useful character are being gradually substituted, <i>vide</i> full statement of changes effected, Appendix 15, Annual Report, 1896-7.</p> <p>This is being done in those prisons which possess the requisite workshop accommodation. The Commissioners hope to provide more shops as funds for building them become available. In addition to the expense which the building involves, there is the question of the increase of staff, which would be necessary for the purposes of supervision and which, under any system of associated labour, would certainly be very considerable.</p>
<p>That productive prison industries be increased as much as possible; especially as regards gardening, farming and land reclamation (paragraphs 56 to 65).</p>	<p>The Commissioners are using every endeavour to make all prison labour productive.</p>
<p>That the 160 acres within the prison walls should be used as far as possible for gardening purposes (paragraph 65).</p>	<p>All the land available within the prison walls has now been brought into cultivation.</p> <p>At Dartmoor over 900 additional acres of land are under reclamation, and are being gradually brought into cultivation.</p>
<p>That every effort be made to secure additional orders from Government Departments (paragraph 66).</p>	<p>This has been done, and considerable success has attended the efforts of the Commissioners. The bulk of the work now carried on in prisons, other than that done for the prison service, is for other Departments of the State. The War Office has afforded material assistance by throwing open to the prisons the manufacture of many articles not previously considered as coming within the capabilities of prison labour, <i>e.g.</i>, bedding, tailoring, sack-making, brush-making, &c. Extensive orders have also been received from the Admiralty for hammocks, coal sacks, seamen's bags, &c., and the Post Office, the Office of Works, and the Stationery Office have considerably increased their orders for prison made goods.</p>
<p>That prisoners be enabled to earn something continuously during their sentence, provided that the money so earned is given to them through the Prisoners' Aid Society (paragraph 71).</p>	<p>A scheme for giving effect to this recommendation has been prepared and is under consideration.</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>VII. That the official in the Prisons Department who supervises the prison industries should have a higher degree of responsibility and authority (paragraph 68).</p>	<p>The Store Accountant has been appointed "Comptroller of Industries." He is charged with the superintendence of all prison industries, and has been given the status and salary of an Inspector of Prisons. The Commissioners have every reason to be satisfied with the successful working of the newly instituted office.</p>
<p>That the number of skilled teachers of industries in the prison service be increased and extra allowances granted to warders who qualify themselves for the supervision of work requiring a certain amount of skill (paragraph 69).</p>	<p>A scheme has been prepared and has received the sanction of the Secretary of State and the Treasury by which an identical system of skilled instruction of trades has been established for local and convict prisons. Under it extra allowances are granted to warders who, possessing the technical qualifications, are employed instructing prisoners, and the remuneration is apportioned according to the number of prisoners engaged in an industry and the character of that industry.</p>
<p>o hold a position somewhat similar to that of "Manufacturer" prior to 1878 for the purpose of directing the prison industries (paragraph 70).</p>	<p>In every prison there is an official styled "Storekeeper" who supervises and accounts for all productive labour. The condition of prison industries today is nearly inverse to what prevailed prior to 1878. A regular trade with the outside public was carried on in those days both at home and abroad. Some prisons even had foreign agents to dispose of their manufactures. This condition of things does not exist now. Practically speaking, all prison labour is for Government departments; the <i>raison d'être</i>, therefore, of a manufacturer on the spot to buy and sell, has disappeared and an absolutely efficient control can be secured by a good organization at headquarters working by and through an efficient body of skilled instructors on the spot.</p>
<p>VIII. That the prisoners should have a larger supply of books. Any occupation which tends to elevate the mind and which is consistent with order and discipline to be encouraged (paragraph 72).</p>	<p>Effect has been given to this recommendation, prisoners being allowed to exchange their books more frequently, and in certain classes as often as twice in each week, whilst prisoners awaiting trial or on remand are allowed to exchange their books as often as they desire. With regard to the issue of books to the younger prisoners, the Chaplains are allowed to exercise a wide discretion.</p>
<p>That selected preachers should be brought in from outside (paragraph 72).</p>	<p>Effect has been given to this recommendation at a large number of the prisons during the past year. Many of the Bishops of Dioceses in which prisons are situated have preached to prisoners. Special missions have also been held under the auspices of the Church Army, by duly licensed lay members of that</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>That means should be taken to lessen the crowding in chapel (paragraph 72) and where possible the number of services which the prisoners have to attend should be reduced. This would enable the prisoners to be divided, each half going to chapel on alternate week days; and that separate services should be held for male and female prisoners respectively when the latter are numerous (paragraph 72).</p>	<p>body at two London prisons, and at Derby. At many of the prisons the local parish clergyman, who is assisted by one or more curates, acts as Chaplain and in this way the prison services are often taken by different clergymen.</p> <p>This has been done. Wherever necessary, the services for male and female prisoners are held on alternate week days, and a separate service for each sex is held on Sundays. This arrangement works satisfactorily.</p>
<p>That the privilege of talking be given, under necessary supervision, to all prisoners under long sentences who have conducted themselves well (paragraph 73).</p>	<p>Governors of convict prisons were instructed in 1895 not to push the so-called "silent" system to an extravagant degree, and the result has been that the reports and punishments for talking have sensibly decreased.</p>
<p>That Sunday exercise be re-established (paragraph 75).</p>	<p>Since October, 1895, exercise has been allowed on Sundays to all prisoners who are not in the first stage.</p>
<p>That gymnastic exercises be organized for the prisoners (paragraph 75).</p>	<p>Physical drill is given daily to all prisoners classed as juveniles, and it is hoped to extend such to older prisoners in due course.</p>
<p>That (1) teaching in classes be adopted where possible. (2) Teachers not to wear a uniform, and more attention to be paid to their position (paragraph 74).</p>	<p>(1) This is done in Convict Prisons, also in Local Prisons in the case of juveniles and illiterates. A new scheme for giving effect to many of the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on the education of prisoners has, with the Secretary of State's approval, been brought into operation. Generally speaking, the objects of the scheme are (a) to increase the number of prisoners eligible for instruction, by making those eligible whose sentences do not fall below <i>three</i> months, <i>four</i> months being the former limit, and to increase the time per week during which they will receive instruction; (b) to bring the educational requirements into conformity with that prevailing in the public elementary schools by the adoption of the first three standards of the day school code, the object being to provide such simple and elementary education as will suffice to enable an illiterate or imperfectly educated prisoner to obtain, during his imprisonment, such instruction as will enable him at least to read and write easily, and to conduct simple calculations in money, likely to be of service to him on discharge for the purpose of the ordinary operations of his</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>of not less than one year and up to three years, with a system of licences graduated according to sentence, the Secretary of State to have the power to transfer prisoners under 23 from prisons to the penal reformatory if satisfied that the treatment there would be more suitable, and provided that the unexpired portion of the imprisonment was not thereby lengthened (paragraph 84).</p>	<p>Commissioners has, with the approval of the Secretary of State, recently visited the United States and closely inspected the two institutions which have attained the greatest notoriety as bold and original attempts to deal with and to solve what may be called the problem of "juvenile-adult criminality." The American experience goes to prove that the essential basis of any differential treatment for the younger criminal rests upon the so-called "indeterminate" sentence, <i>i.e.</i>, the period, during which he will be detained in custody, will not be fixed <i>a priori</i> by the Judge, but will depend upon his conduct and bearing in the reformatory—upon the probability of his reform, and upon his capacity to earn an honest living outside. Any period less than 12 months would be too short to admit of such a diagnosis being made. The basis of any change taken in this direction must consist in a radical alteration of the criminal law as now administered and with which public opinion is familiar. The Commissioners assume, therefore, that the Secretary of State would not be prepared to sanction any such new departure in prison methods without obtaining an authoritative expression of opinion from not only the highest judicial authorities of the land, but also from Chairmen of Quarter Sessions and other magistrates who are practically conversant with the character of the problem with which we are called upon to deal. The Commissioners feel convinced that the Committee, which has advised this change in our criminal methods, will agree in the necessity for proceeding with great caution, and for obtaining the sanction and authority of the most competent legal opinion before embarking on a procedure which is new to English ideas, and the value of which can only be tested by experiment.</p>
<p>(4.) That (a) habitual criminals be kept as a class apart from the other prisoners. (b) It should be considered whether a new form of sentence might not with advantage be placed at the disposal of the judges by which these prisoners could be segregated under special conditions for long periods of detention (paragraph 85).</p>	<p>(a) This is now done (Star Class). (b) The Commissioners have in their observations, 1895, expressed their concurrence with this recommendation.</p>
<p>(5.) That persons sentenced primarily for drunkenness should be specially treated in prisons or parts of prisons set apart for them (paragraph 86).</p>	<p>Under the law as it stands, it is impossible to take steps for carrying out this recommendation as the short sentences imposed make any special treatment ineffective.</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>(6.) That further special consideration as regards the treatment of female prisoners with infants be given (paragraph 87).</p> <p>(7.) That the suggestions of the Royal Commission of 1884 on Irish prisons in regard to unconvicted prisoners be carried out and the diet generally improved (paragraph 88). To be allowed to communicate with one another in presence of Warders.</p> <p>To retain their cell lights till locking up to enable them to continue reading. To be informed on admission that library books will be supplied to them if they desire it. The diet should be improved.</p>	<p>The Commissioners understand that the Secretary of State is contemplating legislation on this question.</p> <p>The expense which the adoption of this proposal would entail, both from an increase of the female staff and the provision of the necessary rooms, has prevented the Commissioners from taking any steps to carry out this proposal. The matter, however, is one which is still receiving their consideration.</p> <p>This is contrary to rules for prisoners awaiting trial, and in the interests of the prisoners themselves the Commissioners are not favourable to the adoption of the recommendation.</p> <p>This has been allowed since November 1895.</p> <p>This is the practice.</p> <p>This has been done by rule made on the 28th February 1896.</p>
<p>(8.) That debtors might be treated as ordinary prisoners; in any case they should be made to work to a reasonable if not penal extent (paragraph 89).</p>	<p>By Clause 5 of the Prisons Bill, it is proposed to repeal the law now regulating the treatment of debtors and to classify them either as 1st or 2nd class misdemeanants, according to the discretion of the Court. If the proposal becomes law, the special privileges they now enjoy will be considerably curtailed and the necessity of labour imposed on them.</p>
<p>XI. That a small local prison might be selected for an experiment as an intermediate prison between discharge and release (paragraph 91).</p>	<p>The new Rule for classification in Convict Prisons (Rule 44) provides for the establishment of an intermediate class through which prisoners may pass during the last year of their sentence. As stated at page 28 of the Report of the Commissioners and Directors for 1896-7, "it does not appear to be necessary to locate these men in a separate or intermediate prison. Apart from the expense, which would be considerable, it is believed that a better opportunity exists for teaching the different trades if they are distributed in the different prisons. The object is</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
	only to establish a preparatory stage for all convicts within a reasonable distance of gaining their liberty."
XII. That candidates for medical appointments in prison should be required to show that they have given special attention to lunacy (paragraph 92).	This is required of all candidates for medical appointments in the prison service.
That the Medical Staff in Holloway and other prisons similarly circumstanced should be strengthened (paragraph 92).	Three additional Deputy Medical Officers have been appointed, viz., at Holloway, Liverpool, and Manchester prisons.
XIII. That weak-minded prisoners should be concentrated, so far as is possible, in special prisons, and should be under special medical supervision, and that it should be considered whether it is right to treat such prisoners as ordinary criminals (paragraph 93).	All convicts with regard to whose mental condition there is any doubt or suspicion are now concentrated at Parkhurst Prison, where the Medical Officer and Staff are accustomed to the control and observation of this class of prisoner. Special regulations are made to meet each case as regards location, employment, and observation, and when these prisoners are reported for misconduct a special report on the case is submitted to the Governor by the Medical Officer for his information and guidance in adjudicating on the offence. The Commissioners have also given instructions having for their object the removal of prisoners to a convict prison for outdoor labour or other special treatment, who, during their confinement for the probationary period of nine months, show signs of becoming weak-minded, or who might become adversely affected in bodily health by undergoing the full period of probation.
XIV. That the advisability of giving the No. 1 stirabout diet should be reconsidered (paragraph 95).	This has been reconsidered, and after full enquiry it has been decided that no change is called for.
XV. That the small cells in Portland and Dartmoor Prisons should be abolished as soon as is practicable (paragraph 96).	This work is in progress, and will be continued till the existing small cells are replaced by full-sized ones.
XVI. That a Deputy Governor should be appointed in prisons with a population all told of over 600 (paragraph 97).	This is done.
XVII. That Chief Warders in charge should rank as Governors of the Fifth Class, but that this class should not be necessarily drawn from the Warder and Clerical ranks (paragraph 98).	Of the 20 prisons which were in charge of Chief Warders, 13 are now in charge of Class 5 Governors.

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>XVIII. That two or more prisons should be selected as training schools for all ranks of the prison staff and be placed under the charge of the most experienced officers in the Service, and that probationers should not be returned as belonging to the prison staff (paragraph 103).</p>	<p>Four training schools have been established at Chelmsford, Hull, Wormwood Scrubs, and Manchester prisons, where newly appointed officers receive instruction for a period of four months in their various duties. Up to the present 86 male and 20 female candidates have undergone a course of training, of whom 65 males and 19 females have been permanently appointed.</p>
<p>XIX. That a certain increase should be made in the Warder staff of the larger prisons, more especially in the case of the female Warders (paragraphs 104 and 105).</p>	<p>The staff is now considered to be ample for present requirements.</p>
<p>XX. That a prison matron should not wear a uniform (paragraph 105).</p>	<p>This recommendation has been carried out.</p>
<p>That provision should be made during the absence on leave or through illness for a deputy matron to take charge in prisons where there are a large number of female prisoners (paragraph 105).</p>	<p>Provision has always been made for the charge of female prisoners during the absence of the matron being taken by the next senior officer, and has been found to work satisfactorily.</p>
<p>XXI. That the duties and responsibilities of Visiting Committees should be confirmed and extended (paragraphs 110 to 114).</p>	<p>The new rules made by the Secretary of State on the 9th April, 1897, considerably extend the powers and duties of Visiting Committees in the direction recommended by the Departmental Committee. It is also proposed by the draft-rules in connection with the new Prisons Bill to increase their powers in regard to the punishment of prisoners.</p>
<p>XXII. That certain changes should be made in the system of prison inspection (paragraphs 115 to 117).</p>	<p>The system has been modified. The Inspectors are no longer attached to particular districts, but inspect different prisons each month. Moreover, their special duties of inspection are defined, and they are required to make a detailed report on each inspection.</p>
<p>That in connection with prison inspection a lady Superintendent should be appointed (paragraphs 115 to 117).</p>	<p>The Superintendence and visitation of female prisoners is well carried out by philanthropic ladies, and the extension of voluntary effort will be warmly encouraged by the further appointment of Lady Visitors. Such appointments have already been made to a large majority of the prisons. The Commissioners have also lately by Circular urged the formation of ladies' committees in connection with Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies, the</p>

Recommendations.	Action taken.
	function of which would be to deal with the cases of female prisoners on discharge.
XXIII. That convict and local prisons should be amalgamated as soon as is practicable (paragraphs 120, 121).	This is practically the case, and provision is being made in the Prison Bill that the Prison Commissioners shall, by <i>virtue of their office</i> , be Directors of Convict Prisons. For the two last years the Commissioners and Directors have made a joint Annual Report.
That a Judicial functionary should take up the duty of hearing charges against prisoners and awarding punishment which is now performed by the Directors of Convict Prisons (paragraphs 120, 121).	It is proposed in the Prison Bill to appoint a Board of Visitors for each Convict Prison, who will be empowered to hear complaints and adjudicate on prison offences.
XXIV. That the Prison Commissioners should meet frequently as a Board (paragraph 121).	This is done.
That the responsibility for special branches of work should be placed on individual Commissioners (paragraph 121).	This is carried out as far as it conveniently can be.
That an additional member of the Prisons Board should be appointed, who should be a medical man (paragraph 92).	From the point of view of convenience of administration we are not in favour of this proposal. We believe that the existing system, under which the medical authority is subordinate to and not co-ordinate with the Board, works most easily and conveniently, and is also the best in the public interests.
	The medical questions that arise, and they are many and important, are not such as are best discussed at or decided by a Board of Commissioners, but are likely to receive closer and better attention from a medical inspector who is free to come and go, to visit and report at will, to submit his opinions freely and unreservedly to the Board, who will, as now, be careful to give them their most earnest attention.
	The principal work of the Prison Board must be administrative, <i>i.e.</i> , connected with details of discipline, employment of prisoners, buildings, promotions, &c., and the presence of a medical expert on the Board would not facilitate the work of the other Commissioners and would seriously hinder his own.

Recommendations.	Action taken.
<p>XXV. That Annual Conferences should be held of representatives from the higher ranks of the prison officials, Managers of Reformatories, Visiting Committees, and Prisoners' Aid Societies for the purpose of exchanging experience and ideas and of establishing closer relations between all officials and public bodies responsible for the management of prisons and the treatment of prisoners (paragraphs 122 to 124).</p>	<p>The Visiting Committees have, under the Rules, power to report to the Secretary of State, not only in their annual reports but at any time, on any matter appertaining to prisons. Should circumstances arise rendering a deputation desirable, the Secretary of State would, no doubt, afford every facility for a conference.</p> <p>As regards the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies, a Central Committee meets regularly at the Central Office of the Reformatory and Refuge Union, and it is in their power at any time to approach the Secretary of State should a formal interview on any matter, in their opinion, become necessary. The Commissioners, far from discouraging, would always welcome any outside and independent expression of opinion on matters relating to the treatment of prisoners.</p>