



Report on the Jails of the
Central Provinces and
Berar for the year ending
the 31st December 1929

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GOVERNMENT OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES.
JAIL DEPARTMENT.

Nagpur, the 20th September 1930.

READ—

The Report on the jails of the Central Provinces and Berar for the year 1929.

READ ALSO—

The District Reports.

RESOLUTION.

1. The administration of the Jail department during the year 1929 does not present any striking features but steady progress was made toward developing the policy of recent years, which is aimed at the more scientific and humane treatment of the criminal, and the application of reforming influences to those who are amenable to reform. To this end there has been increasing specialisation in the treatment of prisoners. Habitual criminals, who as far as can be seen at present are irreclaimable, are strictly segregated from the ordinary prisoners who form the bulk of the jail population, and particular care is taken in dealing with youthful and adolescent offenders to keep them separate from adults, and do all that is possible to reform them. The results achieved in the Narsinghpur jail, which is reserved for young offenders, are reported to be highly satisfactory, and it is expected that still better results will be obtained when the Borstal Act, which has recently come into force, has worked for some time. The question of issuing executive instructions to District Magistrates to see that in future all cases involving offenders below the age of 21 years are tried by Magistrates invested with first class powers is under examination. As the Inspector-General points out, it is desirable that as few youthful offenders as possible should be sent to jail at all, and there are several provisions in the law intended for the achievement of this object. In some cases however a sentence of imprisonment is inevitable, and then the sentence should be sufficient to justify the young offender being sent to

Narsinghpur, where he can properly be dealt with. Legislative provision has also been made for dealing with young children, and the Act will be brought into force as soon as the necessary rules have been framed.

2. The Governor in Council commends to the attention of District Magistrates the remarks of the Inspector-General about short sentences of imprisonment. Section 388, Criminal Procedure Code, at present authorises magistrates who impose sentences of fine only, and of imprisonment in default of payment of fine, to order, when the fine is not paid at once, that the fine shall be payable either in full within thirty days of the date of the order, or in two or three instalments, of which the first shall be payable within thirty days of the order, and the other or others at an interval or at intervals of not more than thirty days, and to suspend the execution of the sentence of imprisonment and release the offender, on the execution by him of a bond for his appearance on the date or dates on which payment of the fine or the instalments thereof, as the case may be, is to be made. The Inspector-General might profitably examine whether full use is being made of these powers, and might bring to the notice of the District Magistrate concerned any case in which it appears to him that a particular magistrate might have avoided committing to jail an offender sentenced to fine only. It will also be of interest if the Inspector-General can arrange in future years to furnish separately figures giving the number of persons admitted to jails to serve sentences not exceeding three months, who have received substantive sentences of imprisonment, and of persons who are admitted to serve sentences of imprisonment in default of payment of fines, where the substantive sentences consist of fines only. The view of the Inspector-General that it is undesirable to familiarise first offenders with prison life is one which every penologist must share, and which every magistrate should keep constantly before him in framing his sentences.

3. A leading feature of the year according to the report has been the completion of the reorganization of the jail industries, but from the body of the report it is not easy to discover the nature or effect of this reorganization. The financial aspect of jail industries

can be illustrated from the report. On the average a prisoner by his work earns roughly 25 per cent of his total cost to the community. In the Central Jails of Nagpur and Jubbulpore his earnings amount to just over 50 per cent of the public money spent on him. Further it would appear from Statement XII-A that through the employment of jail labour Government has saved an average of roughly Rs. 10-1-6 per prisoner. These and similar piecemeal items of information that can be culled from the report, suggest that it is desirable that the reorganization referred to should be clearly set out for the information of the public.

4. The Discharged Prisoners Aid Society has continued to do good work, and also very considerable services have been rendered to our jail population by ladies and gentlemen who have visited jails and tried to awaken interest and hope among prisoners, and generally to help them to those qualities of character and mind that are likely to prepare them to re-enter free life as useful citizens. The Governor in Council notes with appreciation the names of those who have liberally given of their time to this form of public service, and trusts that their numbers will increase. The object of such work is not to give the prisoner an easy time, but to make his sojourn in prison bracing instead of deadening, to keep alive and encourage qualities that hold together social life, and, above all, to increase as far as possible the chance that a sojourn in jail will be really remedial in its effect.

5. The Governor in Council has noted the names of the officers commended by the Inspector-General for good work, and thanks Lt.-Col. Powell for another year of careful administration of his department.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this resolution be submitted to the Government of India in the Home Department and that a copy be forwarded to the Inspector-General of Prisons for information and guidance; also that it be published in the *Central Provinces Gazette*.

By order of the Governor in Council,

E. GORDON,

*Chief Secretary to Government,
Central Provinces.*

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