

(Vincent Stuart) has quoted Hughling Jackson's picture of neurological disorder being likened to the disorder in a classroom when the school master leaves the room, there is no control or direction so chaos reigns. Similarly with psychic disorder, unless the whole psyche is an ordered unity confusion is inevitable. This purpose, the goal is vocation. The word for sin in the New Testament, means "missing the mark". It is used of an arrow or spear thrown at a target. As we miss our mark, so we sin, and in ourselves incur the suffering which nevertheless has in it the hope of repentance, rebirth and reconciliation.

Liverpool Police Liaison Scheme

A meeting on this subject, organised by the National Association for Mental Health was held in London in December.

Chief Inspector Cottam told us about the scheme; he had been in at its inception nine years ago under Sir Charles Martin. At this time research showed that 40 per cent of all children appearing before the Liverpool Juvenile Courts had previous police records. This fact and the heavy increase in juvenile crime generally, finally decided the police to start an experiment which was to be a system of police cautioning combined with work in the home, later known as the Liverpool Police Juvenile Liaison Scheme. The Police may deal with any juvenile who admits to committing a minor offence (the term "minor" was left rather vague) providing that they have no police record and that they and their parents are willing to co-operate. The decision to take a case is usually made by the Assistant Chief Constable (Crime) and is then passed over to a selected juvenile liaison officer, who makes his first contact with the child and his parents; they discuss the help needed and the probable length of supervision required. If any other agency is helping the family the case may be handed over to them (later speakers pointed out that this did not happen in other parts of the country and there was overlapping of services). Since 1957 women police have been doing similar work with adolescent girls.

Inspector Cottam gave interesting figures; in 1951 there was 13.6 per cent recidivism among the children dealt with under the scheme; in 1958 the percentage was 8.8, and out of 6,478 children helped since 1951, 5,906 would so far appear to have been successes. He spoke with enthusiasm and conviction, and claimed the scheme was a blue print for Britain and other parts of the world.

Mr. Bannerman, Principal Probation Officer for Leeds spoke about the scheme as he had examined it when giving evidence to the Ingleby Committee. He had seen it in Liverpool and versions of it in other parts of the country.

It was, he admitted, an attractive scheme; any system which helped to prevent crime and at the same time avoided criminal records for juveniles was worth examining, but he felt there were certain clear objections particularly in regard to the liberty of the subject—were the police to become at the same time police, judge and treatment agency? Variations on the scheme were not always satisfactory; if it were to spread there should be a national pattern with proper safeguards. Many children thought they were "on probation" and there was difficulty in persuading employers that they had not been in front of the courts.

Mr. Hamilton Baynes, Chairman of the Juvenile Courts Committee of the Magistrates' Association approved of Police Cautioning, but he did not approve of the booklet which the Liverpool Police had written and wondered if the police really understood the purpose of Juvenile Courts. Probation officers already did much voluntary work with cases which never reached court, was there not overlapping here? and finally there were difficulties about the child's subsequent appearance in court.

Mrs. Cavenagh, Lecturer in Social Science in Birmingham, brought with her a collection of essays on the police written by the top form of a primary school, which gave a picture of the police as their juvenile clients saw them. The various names given the police amused the audience but were obviously well known to the Chief Inspector. The most telling point was that the children, clearly, did not feel they got such a fair deal from the police as does the adult offender. *Mrs. Cavenagh* felt strongly that the prosecuting function of the police should be kept separate from Casework, which should be done by other agencies.

Mr. Rex Cowan, a graduate of the Delinquency Control Institute, University of S. California, spoke in support of the Liverpool Scheme; it had much in common with various American systems which were proving successful. *Mr. Cowan* said the Americans had properly trained personnel, and he made a plea for similar training here, for the success of the scheme depended on this. He also discussed whether certain offences needed a court appearance or could be dealt with by the police, leaving more time for the Magistrates to give to more serious cases.

In discussion, Chief Inspector Cottam was able to reply to several of the criticisms made. Imperturbable and smiling he told his questioners that he knew his beat, he knew his families and he knew their problems at a level which most social workers would never reach. It was clear however from the debate that many of the audiences were not convinced as to the value of the scheme and the meeting closed on a request that N.A.M.H. should have a follow-up Conference.

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