

A SURVEY OF REFORMATIVE INFLUENCES IN BORSTAL TRAINING.

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HISTORICAL NOTE.

The closing years of the nineteenth century saw many reforms in our penal system, and early in the twentieth century, in 1902, there was an important break away from the traditional methods. This was the beginning of the Borstal system of training for delinquent youths. The first institution of this type was inaugurated at the convict prison near Borstal, a small village on the banks of the Medway. Here a number of convicted lads of between sixteen and twentyone were collected together, to be trained apart from the adults by a new stringent industrial regime. Seven years later this establishment was converted into a new type of penal institution best described as a half-way house between a reformatory and a prison. The fundamental aim was to separate the youth or young adult, from the adult criminal, and thereby prevent the gross corruption which was so prevalent under the old system, and secondly to get away from the confines of dark cells, prison walls, solitary confinement and the harsh unsympathetic repressive discipline, which in the past, proved useless as a means of eliminating crime. From the beginning strong emphasis was placed upon rigorous physical and industrial training, but some scope was allowed for self expression and the development of the interests of youth. An attempt was also made to exert an active influence on the remoulding of the character of the lads. With the passage of time, experience has shown that fewer and fewer restrictive measures are necessary, or advantageous, until to-day Borstal training aims at

"by the personal influence and example of the staff, to create a corporate spirit and a standard of social behaviour which may persist after release; and to this should be added "The task is not to break or knead him into shape but to stimulate some power within to regulate conduct aright. It requires that each lad shall be dealt with as an individual and shall not be regarded as being the same as another lad requiring the same universal prescription". (L.W. Fox - The Modern English Prison).

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DUAL ASPECT OF REFORMATIVE SYSTEMS.

The object of this study is to attempt to evaluate the influences acting on the average lad undergoing Borstal training. An endeavour has been made to combine the investigators viewpoint with the viewpoint of the lads themselves. It is hoped by this means to get a truer picture of the conditions as experienced by the lads, to evaluate the influences impinging on the inmates as far as possible, and to try to ascertain in what directions the way to further improvements in the system may lie. It may be contended that subjective impressions do not make reliable data on which to base far reaching conclusions. While there is much truth in this, it must be conceded that, if, say forty lads out of a hundred feel in much the

same way about a certain matter, their point of view, or attitude, towards it must be respected, and taken into consideration since it is bound to influence their conduct; and the more important the matter at issue, the more consideration must we give to the lads' attitude towards it, if we are hoping to modify his conduct in the outside world when he is ultimately released. It is not intended merely to accept the lads' point of view, or attitude, towards certain things. This would obviously be impossible as we are all creatures of impulse, much of whose conduct is actuated by unconscious motivations and urges. This basic truth is insufficiently realised, or we should display much more toleration and sympathy for the short-comings of one another. Such an attitude of toleration can best be derived from a deeper knowledge and insight into the workings of the minds of our fellow men, and an appreciation that trivial incidents which may mean nothing to ourselves, may be charged with dynamite for a more sensitive individual, or group of individuals. Nowhere is this more evident than in the handling of bodies of men by individuals such as prison or Borstal officers, where a few tactless words may raise a storm of resentment and discord.

THE CASE MATERIAL.

For the purpose of this study 176 lads were observed and interviewed. A larger number was aimed at but the intervention of the war imposed this limitation. The ages varied between 18 years and 24-6/12th. years, and the average age of the group was 20-2/12th. years. They were of approximately average intelligence as borne out by the fact that the mean score on the Columbian Group Test was 65. This is in accordance with the findings of Taylor (Journ. of Ment. Sci. May 1938). The average period of detention and training was 23.6 months. 74 of the 133 lads finally used as case material, or 55.6%, were ex-Approved School (reformatory) lads, and the average number of previous convictions was 2.7 per lad.

THE METHOD USED.

The interviews were strictly confidential. This was facilitated by previous contact and acquaintance with the lads during their training. It was made clear to them that only their honest opinion was of any value, while, on their part, they had nothing to fear from expressing adverse criticism of any part of the administration. While the co-operation of all the lads cannot be guaranteed, it is believed that the great majority did co-operate sincerely. The bulk of them expressed themselves in no uncertain language on the question of their dislikes, while on

the other hand they were glad of a chance of expressing their gratitude towards those officials who had helped them. The interview took place, as far as possible, immediately prior to discharge on license from the institution, and the lads were placed on their honour, not to discuss the topics of the interview with the other lads, so that the next batch might not arrive, primed with answers arrived at by collaboration with other lads.

Many of the lads had difficulty in expressing their feelings and views in words, and in the course of time, a system was evolved which helped the less fluent lads to express themselves. Early in the study, certain definite factors recurred continually, so, after a preliminary talk, these factors were introduced and the lad asked to express his views on them, particularly with regard to what extent he had been helped to make good by them. Care was taken to ensure that the lad did not confuse 'factors which helped him to make good, or, to earn his discharge from the institution', with 'factors from which he merely derived pleasure, such as football'. After this, other factors individual to the lad were inquired into. A preliminary attempt at evaluation by the lad was then attempted, and the lad was asked to state whether a factor or influence had helped him:-

1. Not at all.
2. A little.
3. A lot.
4. A great deal.
5. Tremendously.

Finally the lad was induced to place them in an order beginning with the factor which had helped him to make good most of all, then the next most valuable influence, and so on until an order of preference or choice was obtained. In assessing the results of the investigation, 176 lads were examined, but the first 43 cases were discarded as the results could not be compared and standardised, owing to the gradual evolution of the method. The results are based on the next 133 cases, except in the case of four factors :-

- (a) General atmosphere 116 cases.
- (b) Education 115 cases.
- (c) Hobbies 76 cases.
- (d) Outside contacts 40 cases.

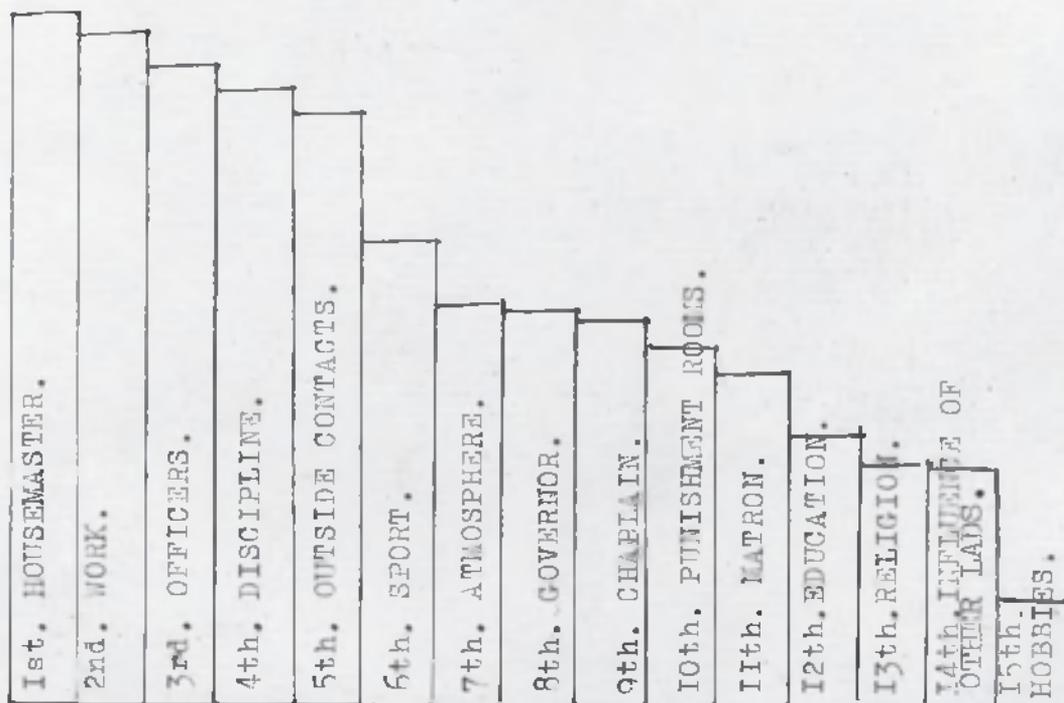
The necessary allowances for this variation was taken into consideration in the statistical representation of the results.

THE RESULTS.

Figure I. shews the order in which the different influences are placed by the 133 lads, and also the quantitative relationship between the different factors using the same data. It is obtained by plotting the distribution of choices-- first, second, third, etc., for each factor or influence, (see figures 2-16) determining the median distribution, and combining the graphical representation of all the medians for the factors, in a frequency distribution diagram.

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FIGURE I. Diagram showing the frequency distribution of the factors involved in the reformation of young delinquents, as estimated by themselves.



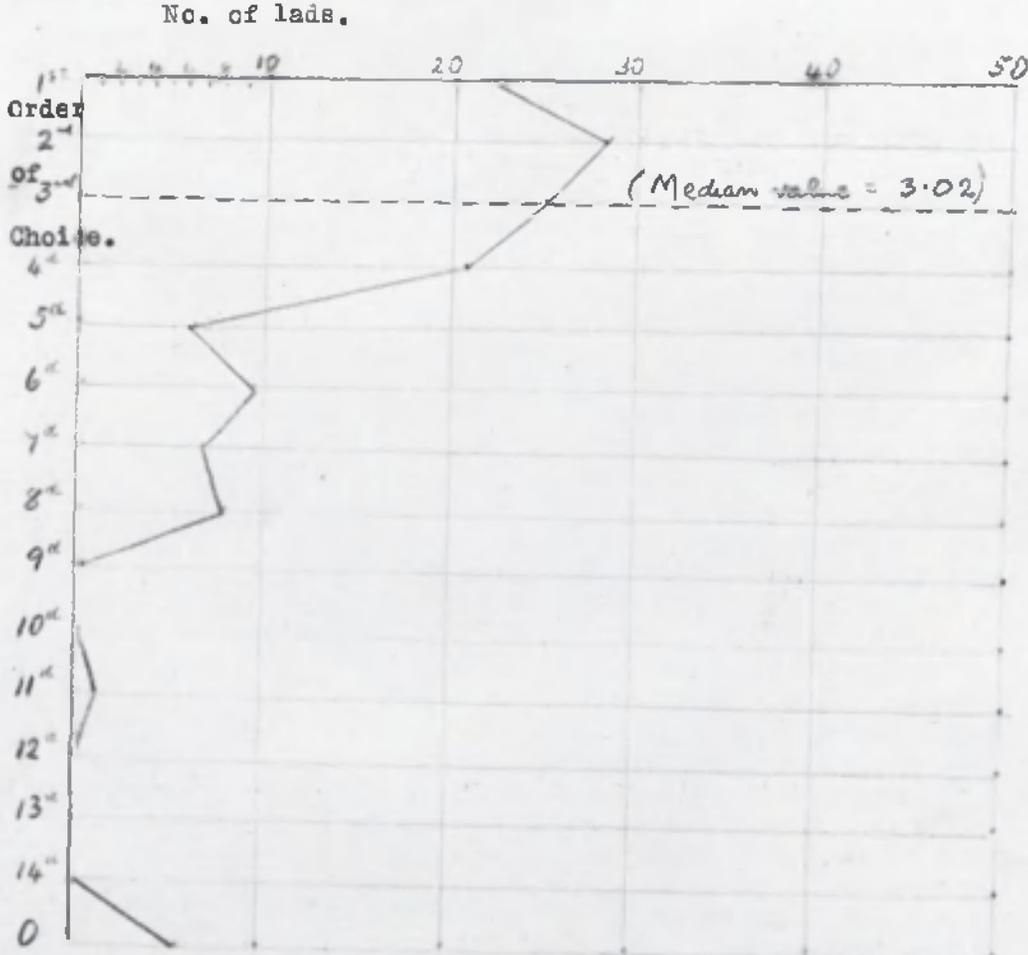
THE FACTORS INVOLVED IN REFORMATION OF YOUNG DELINQUENTS.

I. THE HOUSEMASTER.

A Borstal Institution resembles a public school in so far as it is divided into houses, each house containing about 60 lads, under the control and guidance of a housemaster. Each house has its own colours, its own teams and its own group-leaders (or prefects). The competitive element is also present particularly in sporting activities, so that a tradition, and esprit de corps, is fostered. The housemaster's duty is to give the lads of his house guidance and help in the task of reformation, and this necessitates an intimate knowledge and acquaintance with each lad. The maximum period of detention is

three years, but detention for the full period is seldom enforced, as the authorities are at liberty to discharge a lad on licence when they are satisfied that there is a good prospect of the lad keeping straight. One case only in the series served the full three years. The goal of early discharge is a marked incentive to co-operate and make good. In view of the intimate relationship between the lads and their housemaster, it is not surprising that the housemaster is rated highest in figure 1. Figure 2. illustrates that of the

FIG. 2. THE HOUSE-MASTER. (For explanation see text).



133 lads, 22 placed the house-master first, as a reformativ influence, 28 as second, 25 as third, 21 as fourth, and so on. This graph (figure 2) shows the position allocated to the house-master on a scale, by all 133 lads and the horizontal line (dotted) shows that the median value for these choices lies between third and fourth choice, i.e. at 3.02. If the house-master were unanimously accorded the first position as a reformativ influence, by all the lads, the curve would correspond to a straight line overlying the abscissa and therefore intersect the ordinate at "1". Where the choice is scattered over 1st, 2nd, 3rdnth. positions, however, the lower in value the estimation is in the agregate, the further down is the point of intersection of the median value with the ordinate.

The curve of the graph is interesting. It will be noticed that although it rates highest on the scale yet the peak of the curve is at third choice, unlike work and discipline which are reckoned to be almost as important by the lads and in which the peak of the curve is at first choice.

Most of the lads express considerable respect and gratitude

for their housemasters, using such terms as "He has helped me to look on things differently", "He has helped me a lot, both with my education and to keep straight", and "I owe a tremendous lot to him". A few lads, six in number, stated that they had received no help from their housemaster. In some of these cases there was actual dislike or antagonism towards the housemaster but this does not seem to have had a significant effect on the success of these lads, as the periods of detention are--20, 26, 22, 22, 23, and 36 months respectively. Such a relationship however, is bound to have adverse effects, both on the progress of the lads themselves, and as a deleterious influence on the other lads of the house, particularly the loss of the housemasters' prestige which tends to result. If this state of affairs is recognised, such lads should be transferred to another carefully chosen house. That it may not be recognised, however, is apparent. In one of these cases -- the twenty months discharge-- this was not the explanation. He was a steady, likeable, lad of quite passable moral standards. The explanation of this type, and he represents a distinct group, is that the lad is of obviously better material than the average, and there is every prospect that he will make good with a little encouragement only. As a result, he tends to be neglected by the housemaster, who feels that his time is more usefully expended on the more errant members of his flock. The larger the number of lads under the housemasters' care, the larger does this group tend to become, as the influence of the housemaster, with a lad, is to a large extent, proportional to the time spent with the lad. The best results, therefore, other things being equal, are to be expected in the smaller houses. To quote an example, one of the lads studied, declared frankly, "The housemaster hasn't had much to do with it (i.e. making good). I've only seen him on rare occasions, and I haven't talked to him about my difficulties". There was an element of jealousy in this lad's response which can be explained. Concentration of effort and attention on certain lads, although necessary, is sometimes provocative of jealousy on the part of other lads, who feel that certain individuals tend to monopolise the housemasters' attention. If a housemaster has too many charges, it may be difficult to combat this factor.

Intimate contact, as a means of influencing a lad cannot be too highly stressed. Equally important is the personality of the housemaster, and his capacity for patience, insight, and understanding. The resemblance between the curves in Figure 2, and that of Figure 4, shewing the order

of choices made relative to officers, is interesting in view of the similarly intimate relation existing between them and the lads. In view of the fact that the relationship is largely incidental to other things, in the case of the officers, but is one of design in the case of the housemaster, one would expect that the latter would have ranked considerably higher than the former, instead of only slightly higher. (It is very unlikely that the difference between the two results is statistically significant.). The explanation probably lies in the fact that there are more lads to a house than the housemaster can deal with adequately in the time at his disposal. Many houses contain from fifty to seventy-five lads, while, to get the best results, probably forty is an adequate number. Two other factors probably contribute in this way also. One is that contact with the lads is largely confined to the evening, between 5.30 and 9. p.m., and part of this time is taken up by educational work which might well be undertaken by less vital workers, thereby leaving the housemaster more time for closer contact with his lads.

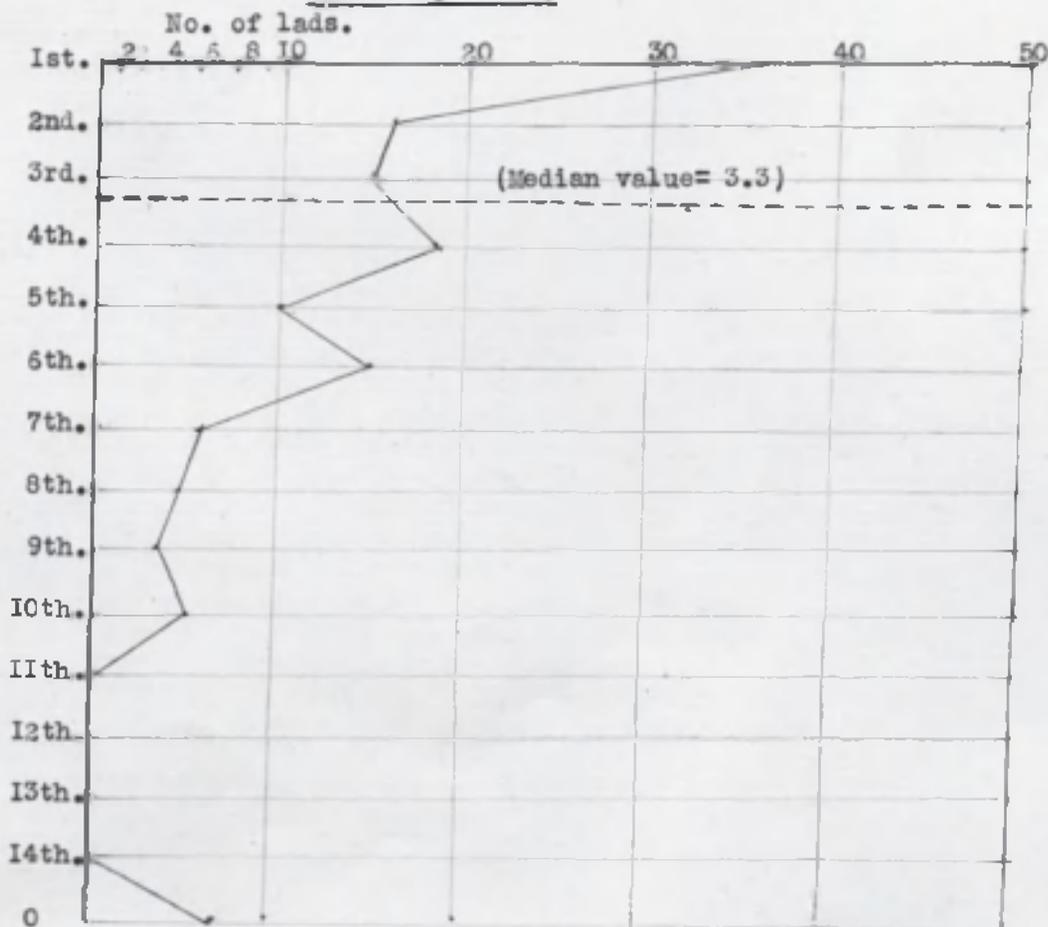
The other is the changing of housemasters which results fairly regularly owing to promotions, transfers, and other exigencies of the service. To take charge of a large group of lads half way through their training and re-establish a helpful intimate relationship takes a considerable period of time.

2. WORK.

On reception at Borstal, every lad is allocated to a preliminary working party. Work in this party is unskilled, and is principally for the purpose of observation and getting the lads settled down. After a period of about ten months they are allocated to a trade party in which the bulk of their working time is spent. The average working day is of eight hours, with four hours on Saturday.

One of the aims of Borstal training is to inculcate habits of industry. That this is largely successful is indicated by the high position accorded to "work" by the lads. It is really a therapeutic measure, parallel to the occupational therapy of the mental hospital. It is placed second in order on the scale (Fig.1) shewing the relation between the various influences under consideration. From Fig.3 it

FIGURE 3. WORK.



will be seen that of the 133 lads, 36 placed it first as a reformative influence, 16 as second, 14 as third, 18 as fourth, ten as fifth, etc. The accompanying graph (Fig.3) shows the position allocated to "work" on a scale by all the 133 lads, and the horizontal dotted line shows that the median value for these choices lies between third and fourth place, i.e. at 3.3. It will be noticed that the number of lads who allocated "Work" to first place is the greatest in the series, not only for allocation to first place but to any one place on the scale, in other words it is the nearest to unanimous choice.

Many lads admit frankly that before coming to Borstal they had never done a decent days work in their lives, but they were now used to hard work, and were prepared to work equally hard outside. They now took a pride in their ability to do a hard days work, and their consciousness of this ability to work hard gave them a confidence and faith in themselves for their future on discharge which was most striking. To quote a few examples - "I feel it (work) has helped me. I have learned to stick a job". "Work and learning a trade has made a big difference. I am very much more confident about the future". "I am more industrious now, I can depend on myself, I have more confidence".

While the more intellectual of the lads value highly the habits of industry taught them, they lament the lack of value of the character of the work learned, owing to the inadequate training period. The period of detention is insufficient to teach a trade properly, and, as the first nine or ten months are spent in labouring parties - chiefly on the land - the time left for teaching a trade is still further shortened. An attempt is made to teach every lad a trade and to attain such proficiency that he can practise it outside as an improver. A few lads complained bitterly that they were unable to practise the trade they were learning outside, and that they had no interest in any other, e.g. motor engineering. This of course raises great difficulties and could only be overcome by allocating such lads to certain institutions with special facilities, and by developing still further the industrial side of the institutional life. This would undoubtedly be worth while. Attempts at vocational planning as practised at present are handicapped by the necessity to put a lad into one of the limited trade parties available, which does not necessarily mean the one for which he is most suited. In the case of a lad likely to be worthy of the trouble and expense, it would be worth while transferring him from an institution where suitable work is not available to an institution where it is. It might easily mean the difference between subsequent relapse into crime and the creation of a useful citizen.

It will be seen from Fig. 3 that seven lads considered "work" to be of no value. On closer enquiry, the reasons unearthed are as follows. Lad (1) "It's not my kind of work, I'm not interested in it". Lad (2) "I've always been used to hard work". Lad (3), "I am a mechanic but here I have to work on the farm". Lads (4), (5), (6), and (7), may be summed up as sheer lack of interest. The

following is a short extract from an essay written voluntarily on one of the exercise books given to the lads for educational purposes. He entitled it "Borstal in a nutshell", and signed himself rather appropriately "Nil desperandum".

"Borstal cannot teach you a trade in the time you are sent there for, but you can be taught to work an eight hour days work and handy at tools at that. Remember you can't be bored if you are busy, that's a truth so simple that it's overlooked. But you can't be busy if you're lazy, that's another truth but it's not so palatable as the other. So whatever you do, do it well".

The viewpoint of the lads here is fundamentally sound as they appreciate firstly the value of acquiring habits of industry and secondly, the confidence acquired by learning the rudiments of a trade which they can practise on release. This helps materially to overcome any feelings of inferiority which may be present and which otherwise would be a drag on his efforts to keep straight on discharge.

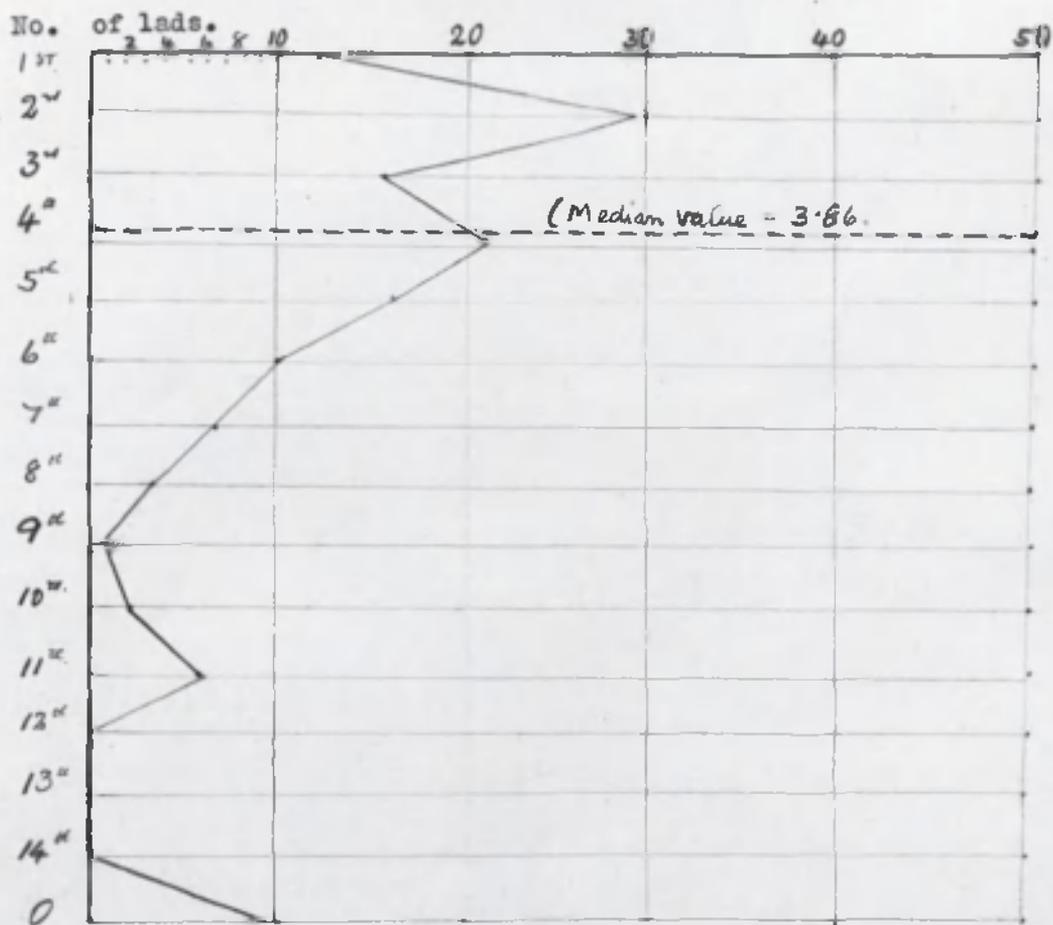
3. OFFICERS.

Supervisory control and discipline of the lads at Borstal is carried out by officers. While in a measure they are analogous to prison officers, there are several differences -

1. They wear ordinary clothes, i.e. no uniform.
2. They are in closer contact with their charges.
3. There is more continuity in their work - i.e. the same officer is associated with the same lads for lengthy periods.
4. The association is much more friendly and intimate than that between a prisoner and a prison officer.

The role played by the officers in the lives of the lads is very important as is attested by the position accorded to the officers by the lads in Fig.1. From Fig.4 (see next page) it will be seen that thirteen lads placed the officers first as a reformatory influence, twenty-nine as second, sixteen as third, twenty-one as fourth, and so on. The median value for the choices of 133 lads lies between the third and fourth places, i.e. at 3.86. Investigation of this relationship discloses that it is strongest and most influential in the small working parties where daily and constant contact is maintained, e.g. in the working party where from two to five lads are frequently working together in the decoration of a house under an officer instructor. Many lads enter into discussions with the officers and ventilate their problems, and many conscientious officers utilise these opportunities for encouragement and good advice, which is accepted, often more readily, than if a lad is sought out, and talked to, by a higher official, with the same object. A good proportion of lads ascribe their "making good" entirely to the influence of a single officer and spontaneously

FIGURE 4. THE OFFICERS.

Order
of
Choice.

express affection and unswerving loyalty towards him. An interesting fact which emerges, is that an officer who can inspire the deepest respect and affection in one lad may be detested and hated by another. Several cases of this type occurred in this series. It brings to mind the incident depicted by Goldsmith in one of his works, of the two men who, never having seen one another before, met, and straightway started to fight. The personality and influence, emanated by an individual, may lead to instinctive attraction or repulsion.

Of the nine lads who considered that they had derived no help from the officers, lad (1) was a shy reserved lad who kept aloof from all the staff. Lads (2), (3), and (4) had developed no close contacts with the officers. Lad (4) had been sentenced to two years Borstal detention only. The average course of a two year case is distinctly less favourable than a three year case. The two year lads can seldom earn an early discharge, they appreciate that they must be released after much the same period as the lads who try hard to get out early and, largely owing to the lack of this incentive, they make less effort, and co-operate less in their training than the three year cases. The result is that many two year cases have to be released when an extended period of training would have been to their advantage. This strongly supports the contention of Burt who states:-

"It may be added that with almost all the cases for which Borstal treatment is considered worth while, the maximum rather than the minimum sentence should be imposed. When long standing habits have to be broken, and fresh habits to be permanently built up, the element of time is essential".

(The Young Delinquent).

Lads (5), and (6) were careless and indifferent lads, both two year cases also. Lad (7) was a surly, suspicious, undisciplined lad, who had been kept for thirty months. Lad (8) was an uncouth unco-operative lad who had been detained for the full period of three years. Lad (9) had a poor opinion of all the officers except one, of whom he thought very highly. In spite of this, he preferred to group the officers as of no value.

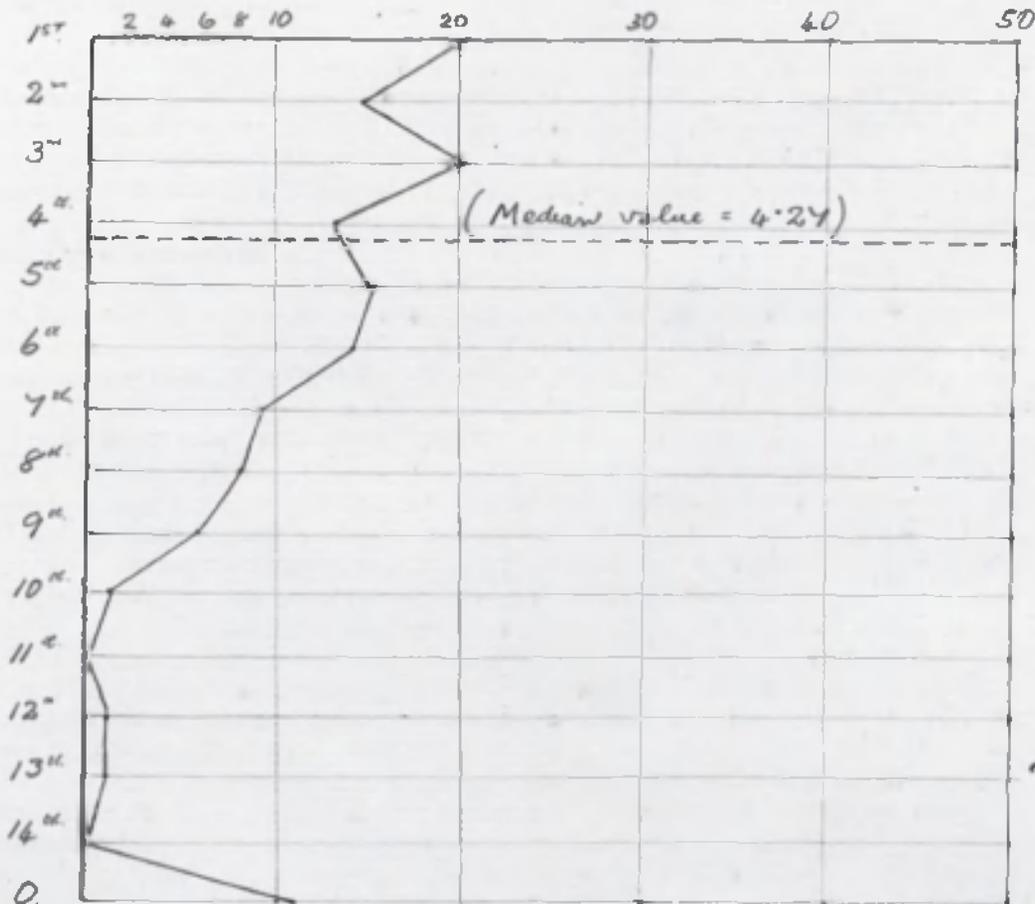
From this three facts emerge. Firstly, the importance of close and intimate contact with the lads. Secondly, the importance of the type of officer -- a zealous conscientious officer with a sincere interest in the welfare of the lads, can exert a very potent influence for good. The lads are quick to appreciate example as well as precept. Thirdly, the sentence should be at least three years in order to provide sufficient time to correct anti-social trends, to re-orientate the lad towards society, and to induce the lad to strive from the beginning to "make good" and earn an early discharge.

4. DISCIPLINE.

The necessity for discipline in an Institution such as a Borstal Institution is well recognised by the lads themselves, and they are remarkably quick in noticing any falling off in the standard of discipline and expressing scorn accordingly. It is rated fourth in Fig.1. Fig. 5 illustrates that twenty lads rated

FIG.5 DISCIPLINE.

No of lads.



discipline first as a reformative influence, fourteen as second, twenty as third, thirteen as fourth, fifteen as fifth, and so on. The median value for the choices of 133 lads lies between fourth and fifth place, i.e. at 4.27.

The difference in point of view between a lad early and in the middle of his Borstal career, and a lad at the end of it, must be taken into consideration. Thus in the first few months lads often find the disciplinary restrictions irksome and annoying, but it is surprising how quickly they readjust to a new and relatively strict regime, and even to like it as long as they are on the right side of the regulations. When a lad gets into

trouble with the Borstal authorities through infringement of the regulations, he frequently becomes resentful and up against all the disciplinary measures, but a short talk on the necessity of framing regulations for the smooth running of the institution and the well being of all the inmates as a whole, including himself, coupled with some solitude for reflection, usually converts him into a reasonable co-operative individual. Much has been said about the harmfulness of stern disciplinary measures. This can be largely explained by the fact that inelastic disciplinary methods may have a disastrous effect on the development of young children, in the early years of life, when their reaction pattern to life is almost completely in the making. According to Freud, during the first five years of life, are laid down the fundamental character trends and reaction patterns, healthy or neurotic, which will subsequently be expressed throughout life. (See also Ernest Jones--'Psycho-analysis'). By the age of twelve years, there is considerable capacity for adaptation, and resistance to character modifications, but at the same time commonsense and the ability to profit by experience, are developing rapidly.

A noteworthy fact which I noticed, was that some lads who had been constantly in hot water through their turbulence of spirit, and waywardness, and while under punishment had expressed hatred, viciousness, and antagonism, at the end of their detention parted the best of friends with the staff, and bore no ill-will for what they had endured during their stormy career. After some time I came to the conclusion that the great majority of lads would stand a just and reasonable punishment for disciplinary offences, and emerge better and wiser, provided it was made clear to them, that the punishment meted out, was not done in any way as revenge or retaliation, but was to ensure the well being of the rest of the community, the smooth-running of the institution, and to teach him the value of co-operation and the disadvantages of conflict. If a lad failed continuously to respond to this line of approach, the outlook was bad. Such lads usually shewed constitutional defects such as temperamental instability, cyclothymia, schizophrenic trends, or defective moral sense.

Of the eleven lads who considered the discipline of the institution of no value, six explained this as due to the fact that, in their opinion, there was insufficient discipline. Three were quick-tempered, rather inco-operative, lads who resented discipline almost continuously. Of the remaining two, one was an inco-operative lad of very low moral standards, who had to be detained for the full three years, and the other was of the drifter type which resists character modification by adopting an attitude of passive but lazy, co-operation. While we do not necessarily accept the opinion of the lads as being correct, the statement that discipline was too slack cannot be taken lightly. This question was discussed with the majority of the lads and 26 out of the 133, or 19.6 %, --practically one-fifth--declared that discipline was too slack. Many stated that they would be happier if there was stricter discipline, and compared present conditions with

previous experiences - e.g. in training ships, such as the "T.S.Akbar". Of recent years many reforms have been carried out in prison and Borstal administration, one of these being a relaxation of repressive and harsh measures. There is less regimentation, the men and lads are treated more as individuals than en masse, and are given much more freedom for self expression. The happier, more contented, and more productive atmosphere of our penal institutions, is the justification for this, but there are indications that there are definite limits to the amount of response that we can expect from these more enlightened methods. Many people are happier with a strictly ordered regime, free from the necessity of making choices and of striving to attain a standard which is beyond their capacity, in an atmosphere of competition. They are the hewers of wood and drawers of water, lacking in initiative and usually below average intelligence. Stimulation of this type is necessary, but should be kept within the limits of their capacity. This harsher regime may also satisfy an unconscious need for punishment - a not unimportant factor in the make up of badly integrated personalities. This need for punishment usually arises from feelings of guilt present in the unconscious mind of the individual, and has its origin more often in wishes of the past, than in any reprehensible acts. To make this clearer the mechanism of the "death wish" directed towards a beloved relative may be cited.

"A father, whose dream when interpreted (during a course of psycho-therapy) shewed that he wished for the death of his eldest and favourite child, was in the same way obliged to recall that there was a time when this wish was not unknown to him. The man, whose marriage had proved a disappointment, often thought when the child was still an infant, that if the little creature who meant nothing to him were to die, he would again be free, and would make better use of his freedom. (S.Freud. "Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis" ch.13.)

Such wishes long completely repressed from consciousness, continue to exist in the unconscious, and may exert a dynamic effect on the life of the individual.

From this point of view, the Borstal population can be divided roughly into three groups:-

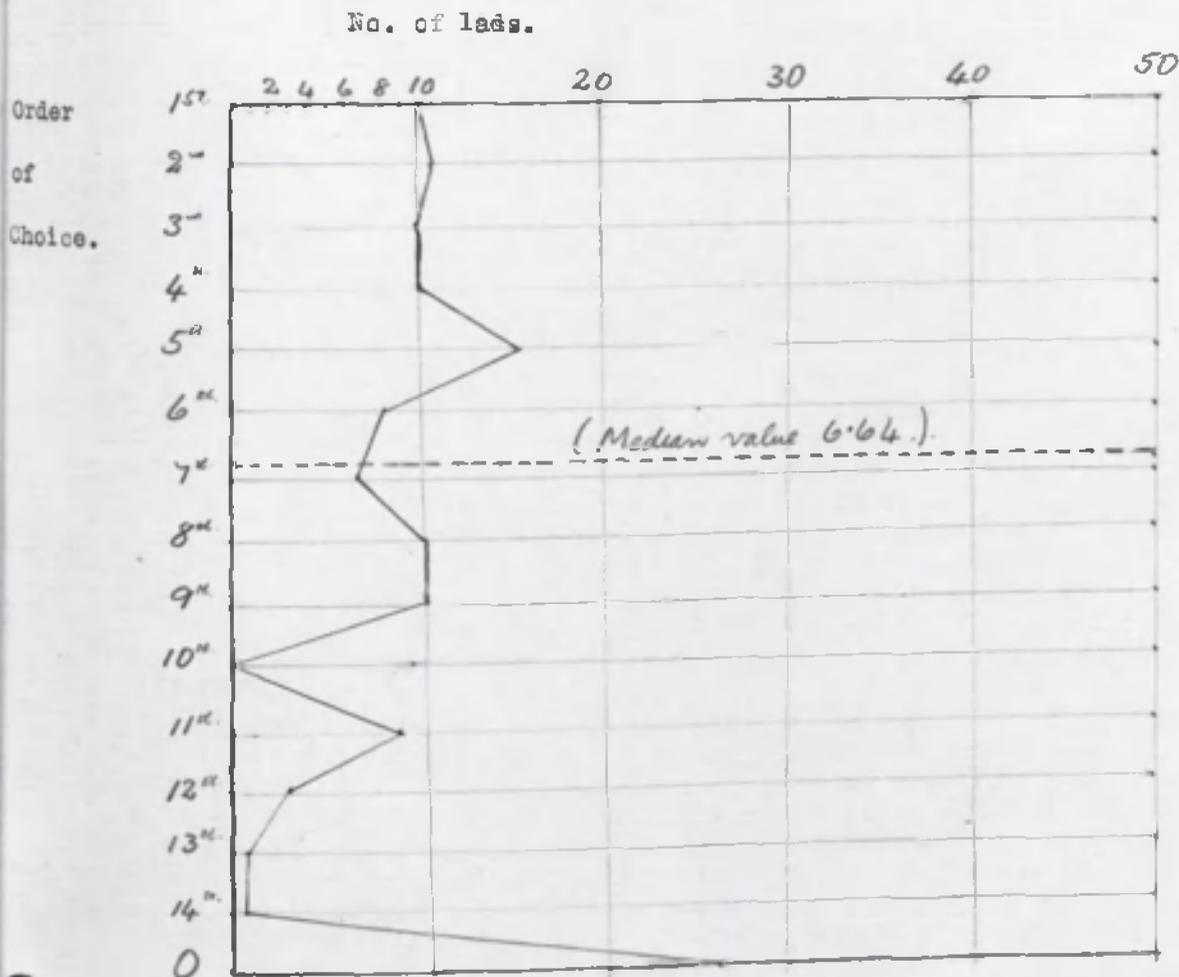
1. Those who appreciate, and make good use of, a regime free from severe disciplinary restrictions.
2. Those who exploit or abuse these privileges and whose abuses tend to act directly, or react harmfully, on fellow inmates.
3. Those who are happiest in a strictly ordered regime.

Judging by experience, group 2 is probably a minority but they may cause harm and trouble out of all proportion to their numbers. Groups 1 and 3 are probably approximately equal.

The appreciation of the value of discipline by the lads however, emerges as a salient feature, and as one lad said "It has made a big change in me. It has improved my manners, my self-control, and my foresight". It would appear, therefore, that it is better that discipline should err on the strict side rather than on the slack side.

5. SPORT.

Sport plays an important part in the life of a Borstal Institution. Football, cricket, boxing, gymnastics, and, at some Institutions, swimming, are the chief forms of recreational activity. Sport is rated sixth in scale (Fig) 1. Fig. 6 illustrates that ten lads rated sport first as a reformatory influence, eleven as second, ten as third, ten as fourth, etc. The median value for the choices of 133 lads lies between sixth and seventh places, i.e. at 6.64.

FIG.6 SPORT.

The role of sport in the reformation of Borstal lads is difficult to evaluate, as, although it exerts a tremendous influence on the lives of all the inmates, its influence is reformatory largely indirectly. Sport is the greatest source of pleasure to the lads and, in gathering the material for this study, it was necessary to emphasise that they must distinguish between its true value and merit in helping them to make good,

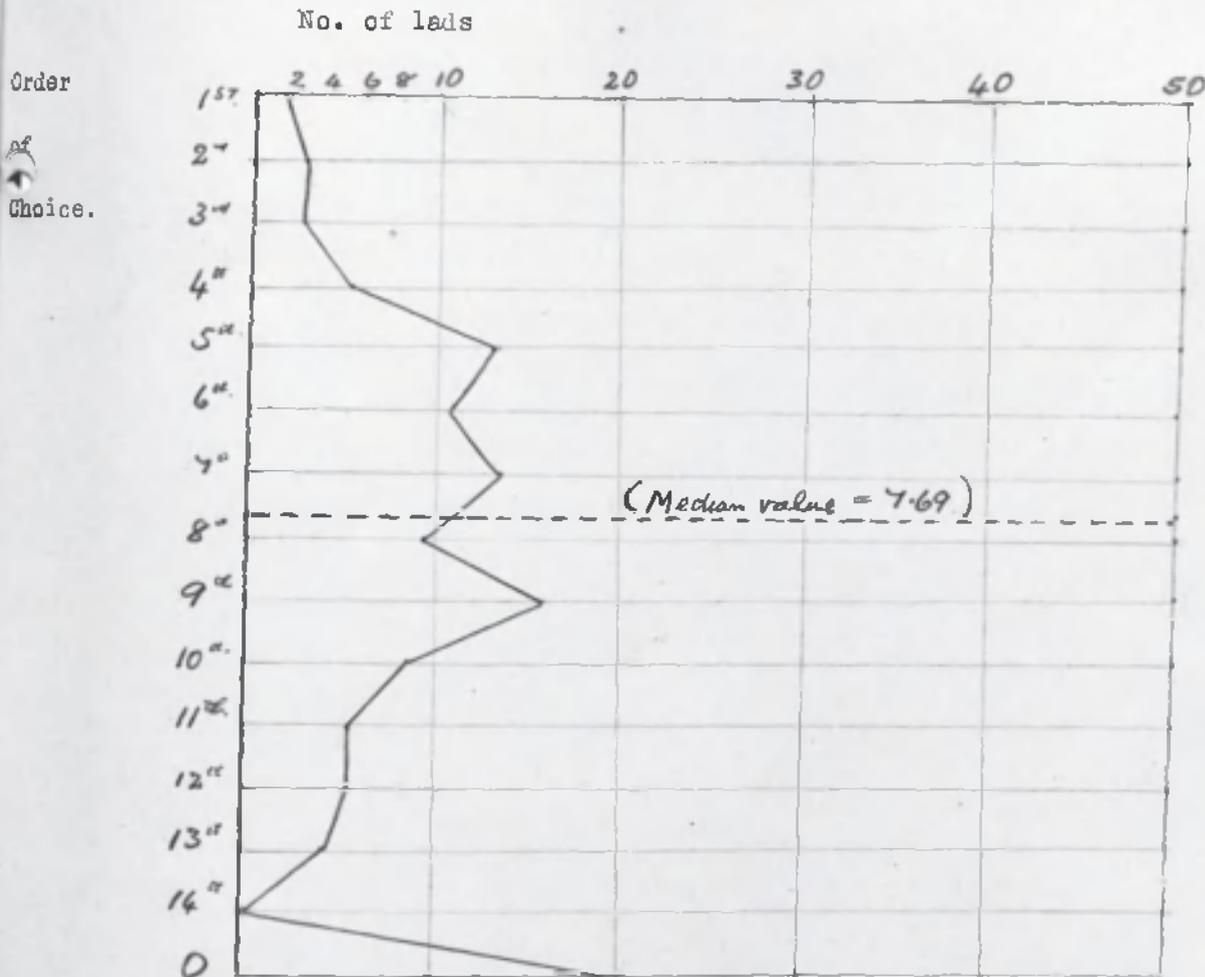
and its capacity to give them pleasure and happiness. That this object was largely achieved, is indicated by the modest position on Fig.1 accorded to "sport", in contrast to the position allocated to it before this distinction was driven home. Even as a purely reformatory influence, however, it is a potent force, as is indicated by the following actual remarks. "I have learned to be a good loser", "I have learned to play fair and I have more self-control and confidence". "It has helped me tremendously, physically and in sportsmanship". "It is the greatest thing in the world and keeps you from thinking of filth". "It has taught me good use of leisure". "I have learned to be one of a team". The lad responsible for the third last quotation had stumbled accidentally on an important physiological truth. Vigorous and engrossing physical exercises in the adolescent, are channels of sublimation of the sex urges, i.e. they are substitutive activities. They drain off the energies of the sex impulses which, in lads of this age and type are of great intensity. (See also Collins & Dreyer - "Psychology and Practical Life" Ch. 4).

The most popular day of the week is undoubtedly Saturday. For two reasons - football and pay-day. If, due to the inclemency of the weather, the lads were kept in all the afternoon instead of being allowed to go to the playing fields, they grouched bitterly. If it was raining with tropical intensity, they would peer out of the rain lashed windows and grumble that it was "only a bit damp". Their motto was "nil desperandum".

A fair proportion - twenty-six out of the 133 - considered that the sports had not been a reformatory influence in their particular case. This was irrespective of its value as a source of pleasure and recreation. I do not think it is possible to dissociate the two aspects of sport completely, however, as the one aspect tends to be complementary to the other, so that the value of sport is probably underestimated. The healthy enjoyment of participating in, and watching, sports, has a definitely stimulating effect and is creative of a healthy manly atmosphere which does much to develop all that is best in the lad's character. Occasionally, repeated success in the field, or the ring, or rather lack of failure, tends to the production of "swelled head", but pride goes before a fall and such lads are eventually disillusioned with inestimable benefit to their character and outlook. An insight into the importance of sport in the life of the lads is gained by the knowledge that sport is one of the three topics, which closely rival each other for first place in the conversation of the lads.

6. ATMOSPHERE.

The atmosphere (vide infra) of this Borstal Institution is rated seventh in Fig.1. Fig.7 illustrates that two lads rated atmosphere as a reformatory influence, first, three as second, three as third, five as fourth, thirteen as fifth, and so on. The median value for the choices of 116 lads (a slightly smaller series) was between seventh and eighth place,



i.e. at 7.69. Nineteen lads considered that the atmosphere or general spirit, or feeling of the Institution was unhelpful. Of these nineteen, at least nine were lads of an unpleasant, unco-operative type, and of less than average intelligence. Their average period of detention was 27.3 months, which is greater than the average. Of the 116 lads, 97 considered that the general atmosphere or spirit of the place had helped them in varying degree; to make good. Most of them expressed themselves as being relatively happy, although the loss of their freedom took a great deal of compensating. The expressions used spontaneously with regard to the prevailing atmosphere were chiefly "Jolly good", "helpful", "friendly and happy" and "sobering and steadying". These are quite representative of the attitude of the lads towards this factor but the view of the lads is too superficial and is probably an under-estimate of its real value. The character of the atmosphere, or prevailing spirit, or feeling which is diffused through an Institution or small community is a remarkably accurate index of the degree of harmony and success of

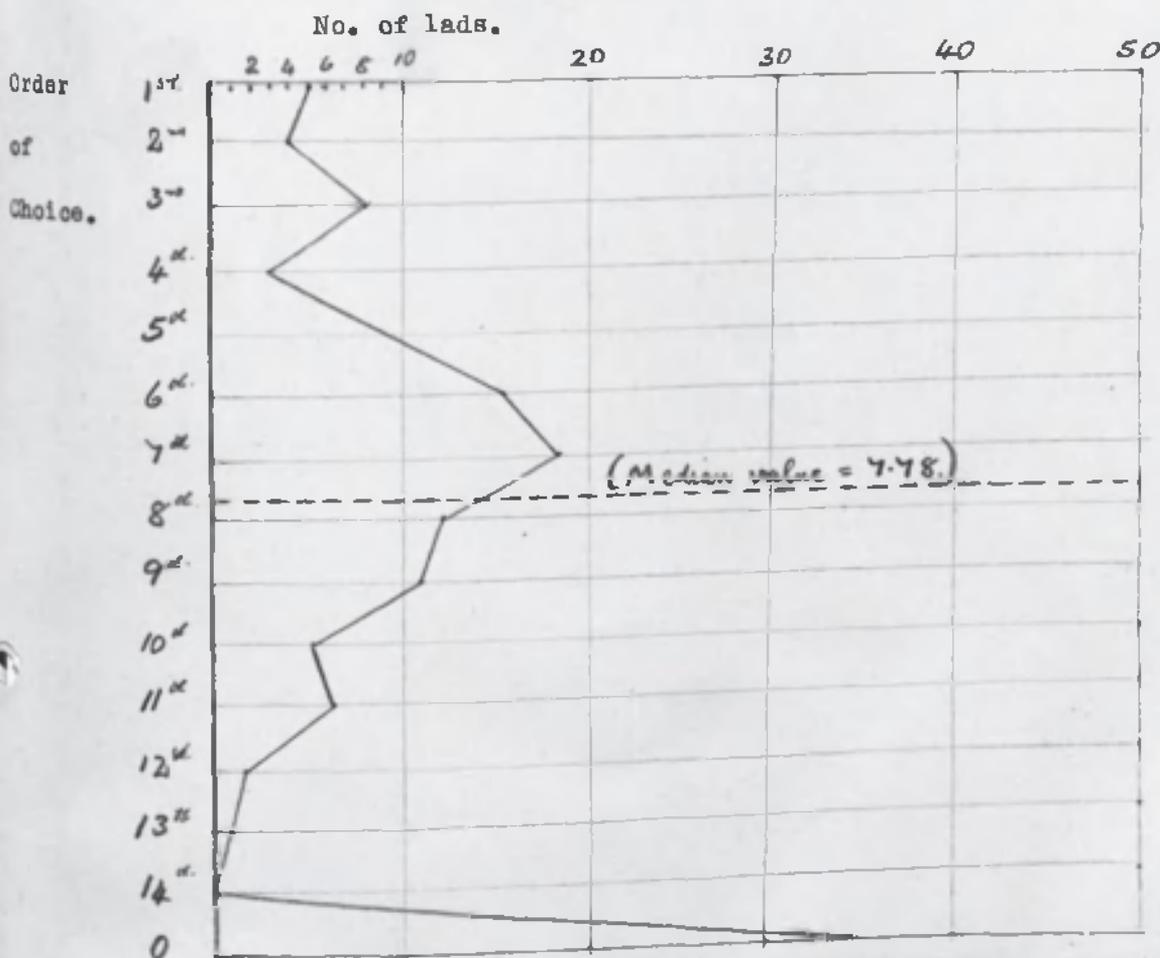
aim, of the group. This atmosphere, or spirit, while influenced materially by physical surroundings, such as drab cheerless buildings and furnishings or a profusion of flowers, colours, and natural beauty, is, in the main, the result of the fusion of the natural expression of the individual members of the community. In the same sense as life for the individual is what he makes it, so life for a self contained community is a fusion of what they make it. Certain individuals always stand out in a community and exert more than average influence. They tend to mould the atmosphere for less dominant personalities. This dominance may be acquired naturally, as in primitive communities, or be due to the clever use of authority. Thus at some point in the development of a community, an atmosphere of a certain type is created, and by its positive influence, tends to maintain itself, unless forces of a different kind arise which are strong enough to destroy it and set up a new type of influence. Thus is a powerful tradition built up by the efforts conscious and unconscious, of the dominant personalities of the group. This tradition exerts a positive influence on all who come within its ambit. In an Institution, such as a Borstal Institution, the type of tradition and atmosphere is the direct result of the policy adopted by the administration at the head of which there is the Governor, and there is ample confirmation by the lads that the tradition and atmosphere here is of a positive and constructive kind. As the lads in turn come under its influence, they in turn contribute new life and vigour to it and so influence the new arrivals as they become part of the community. Let me quote another extract from the essay mentioned previously "Borstal in a Nutshell":-

"How nice to be in the Special Grade, to be able to be sent on a job all by yourself; and you will have a certain amount of authority over the lads in brown (new lads). Let your motto be "One of unselfishness, duty, sympathy, and the love of one's fellows". When you join your house get to know the "ins and outs", your house-master, matron and officers will assist you. Go to one of the many hobby classes, join in the many games. If you cannot play football learn. Cups and shields can be won, and held for one year by the house scoring the most points at ~~Boxing~~, football etc."

Thus is a tradition and atmosphere of this kind quietly and unobtrusively at work, influencing and moulding these lads into new and better patterns, so that they will become useful units of society. As one lad put it tersely "Borstal exists to produce hard working decent men".

7. THE GOVERNOR.

As the name implies the Governor is the guiding and controlling influence at the head of the administration of the Institution. Within wide limits, he determines the general policy of the Institution and exerts a great influence on the tradition and atmosphere of the little community. In addition to this administrative capacity, he has many points of contact with the lads, who can, and do, approach him freely. He is the final arbiter of whether, and when, a lad should be released on licence before the expiry of the period of detention. Being one man among approximately 340 lads and with much administrative responsibility on his shoulders, the same relation of intimacy and contact cannot be developed with all the lads, so that as a direct influence, from the point of view of the lads, the Governor is rated eighth in Fig. 1. Fig. 8 illustrates that five lads rated the Governor as a reformatory influence as first, four as second, eight as third, three as fourth, nine as fifth, fifteen as sixth, eighteen as seventh (peak) etc. The median value for the choices of 133 lads was between the seventh and eighth place, i.e. at 7.78.

FIGURE 8. THE GOVERNOR.

As a result of his position, power and personality, the Governor is invested with considerable prestige, so that talks from him usually create a deep and lasting impression. For example a number of lads stated that they had derived much help from talks he had given them in groups. Two lads referred with deep gratitude to the results of interviews with the governor which had been initiated by being brought before the Governor for breaches of discipline. The work of the Governor, however, in a large measure, makes itself felt through the staff in general, his is the directing influence, and to him must be attributed a great portion of the credit arising from the success of the work of the Institution as a whole.

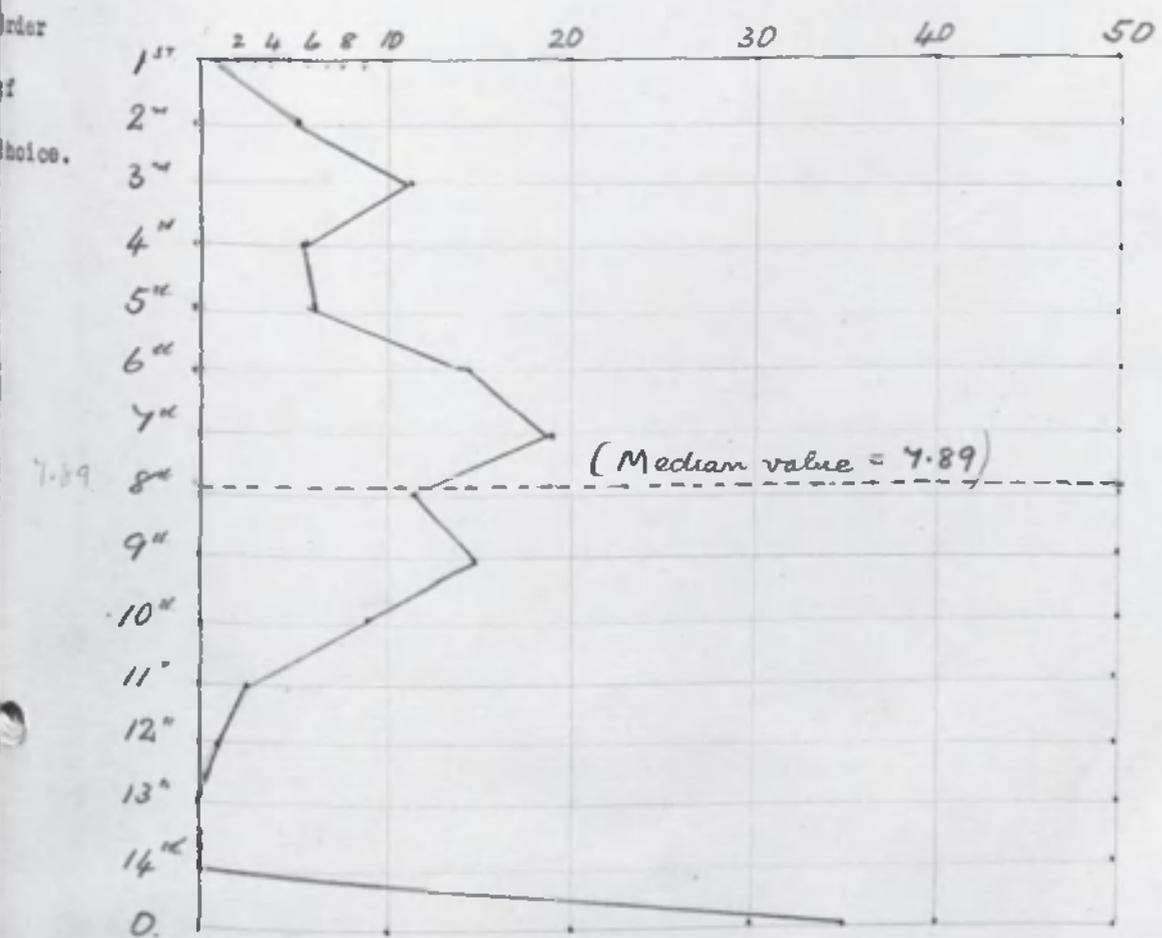
CHAPLAIN and R.C. PRIEST.

(This section should be read in conjunction with the next section on 'religion'.)

The chaplain and R.C. priest are responsible for the religious and spiritual welfare of the lads of their respective denominations. Their task is not easy, because the greater number come here uninterested in religion, and usually without religious training. The influence of the chaplain and R.C. priest, considering them jointly from this point of view, and, including in the statistical representation, the Jewish rabbi, and the Wesleyan and Methodist ministers, who have each one or two adherents, is rated ninth in Fig. (1). Figure (9) illustrates that one lad rated this influence as first, six as second, eleven as third, five as fourth, six as fifth, fourteen as sixth, eighteen as seventh, etc.

FIGURE 9. CHAPLAIN ETC.

No. of lads.



The median value for the choices of 133 lads lies between 7th and 8th place i.e. at 7.89. The Church of England chaplain's appointment is a whole time one although he has additional charges in the staff and their families. The R.C. priest, Jewish rabbi, etc. have part-time appointments only. In this sphere again, the spontaneous estimate of the lads appears to be conditioned to a large extent by the possibilities of intimate and individual contact. With a constantly changing population, there are definite limits to the number of lads who can be adequately dealt with. The only alternative is to handle the lads in groups, or classes which should be kept as small as possible, in order to meet individual needs.

The age-old question of the seed and the soil arises. That the seed is good is beyond question and the response of those lads who shewed a sincere interest in religious and spiritual matters bears this out. Most lads of the better type, lads with an appreciation of spiritual values, never look back. They often shew their affection and respect for their religious teacher by correspondence with him, long after discharge into the outside world. This capacity to appreciate the finer things in life is given to all too few of the lads here, such remarks as the following which created a deep impression, and gave one a glimpse of the better side of this lad's inner life "Beyond the window bars lies freedom, and things of beauty", are very seldom heard. On looking at Fig.9 one tends to the conclusion that it is the soil that creates the difficulty in the religious approach. This is strongly supported by consideration of Fig.10 which shews graphically the views of the lads on the value of religion itself. 62 out of 133 lads, or 46% considered it to be of no value at all.

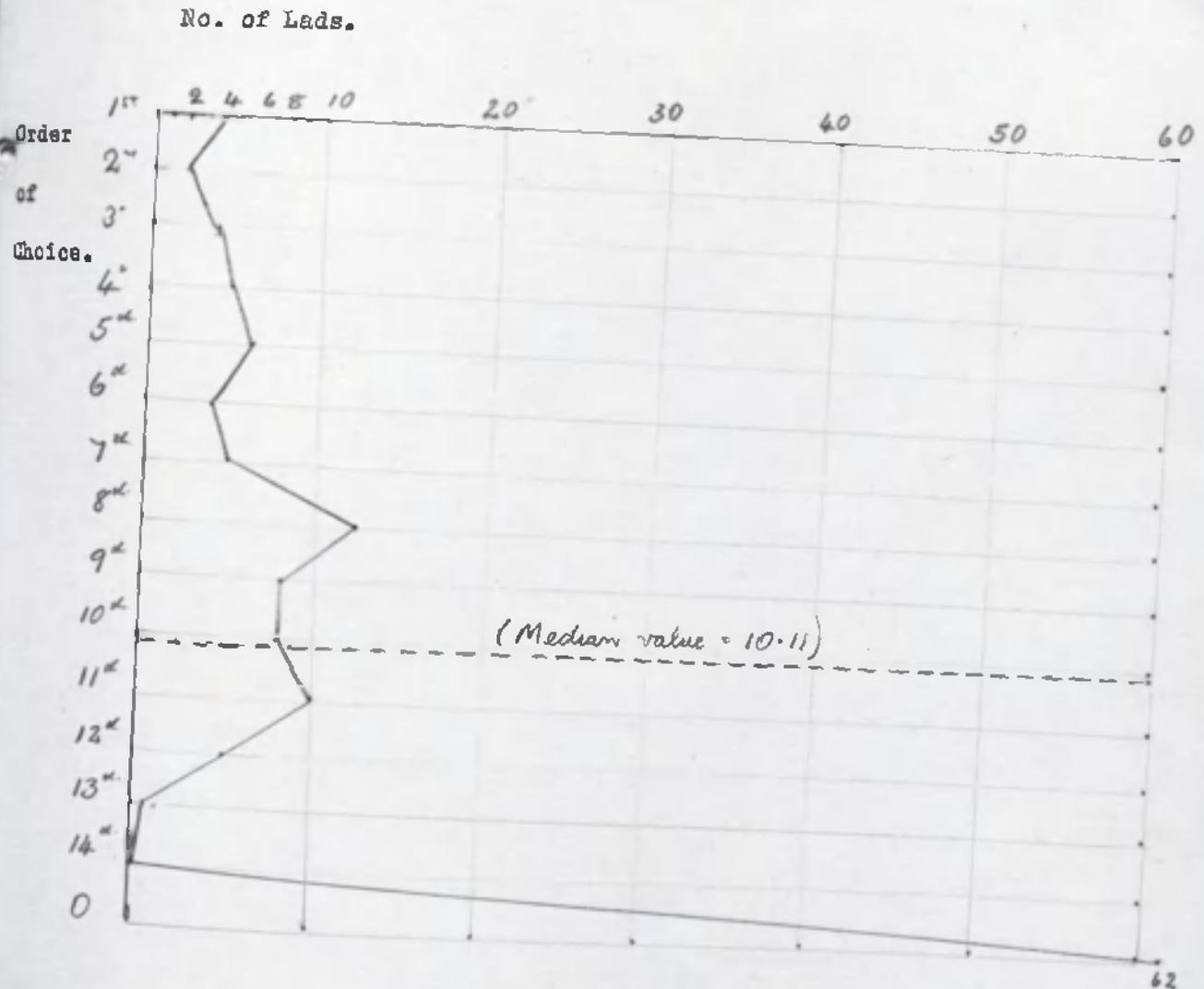
The majority of these lads are boisterous, irresponsible, adolescents, when they first come to Borstal. Their average age is 18 years 2months when first received. Although these lads come from all varieties of homes, the type of home which predominates is the poorer, slovenly, overcrowded one, where culture, morality, and religious influence particularly, are at a minimum. When they first come here, on the whole, the qualities they tend to admire most, are physical superiority, daring and adventurousness. One of the psychological changes characteristic of the adolescent, is the development of self-consciousness, and this tends to inhibit his interest in anything which will signal him out for attention, and particularly being scoffed at, by his tougher companions.

These factors work together to render the religious approach a difficult and arduous one, but nevertheless it is one which is well worth while, and which is productive of definite results in the reclamation of these young people.

9. RELIGION.

This section is largely bound up with the previous one, and much the same considerations apply. As an active influence for good, it is rated by the lads as thirteenth in place, i.e. in Fig.1. Fig.10 illustrates that four lads rated it first, two as second, three as third, four as fourth, six as fifth, etc. The median value for the choices of 133 lads was /

FIGURE 10. RELIGION.



between the tenth and eleven positions i.e. at 10.11.

Of the 133 lads, 84 were of Church of England denomination. 32 of these lads had been confirmed before reception and 17 were confirmed during the course of their training. Of the 33 lads confirmed before reception, 31 had been confirmed at Approved Schools (reformatories). As this represents 36.9% of all the Church of England lads of the series, one is tempted to infer that confirmation has not helped to arrest the criminal career of these young delinquents, or, that there is a tendency to the light-hearted and indiscriminate confirmation of these young people.

Since religious teaching and practice has been a definite environmental influence during their training, it is bound to have made some impression on the minds of the lads, in spite of the negative attitude adopted towards it by a large proportion of them -- in this case 62 out of 133 or 46%. This negative attitude is entirely passive however. In no case did a lad ever express antagonism to religious teaching. On the contrary

many of the lads who took up the position that religion was of no value, were lads of a contemplative type, who had thought things out for themselves, and arrived at a socially acceptable philosophy of life based on freethought or rationalist principles. The following definition of a rationalist "One who believes himself guided in his opinions solely by reason, independantly of authority especially in regard to religion-- denying supernatural relation", (Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary), fits this group admirably. The error of this belief, which assumes the entire domination of the mind by its purely intellectual aspect, and leaves out of account the dynamic influence of fundamental urges, conscious and unconscious mental conflict, changing circumstances, and changing moods, has already been stressed. Such lads are quite willing to discuss religious topics and problems, and this ventilation of the subject does help to raise their moral standards and to give them a healthier and more responsible outlook, although, when confronted with the task of assessing the value of religious practice to themselves, they hasten to deny it, strong in the belief that they have evolved a superior philosophy themselves.

Adolescent doubt is a more or less normal phase in the religious development of the individual, and, if sympathetically dealt with in its earlier stages, would, in most cases, be resolved satisfactorily. By the time a lad, of the type under consideration, comes under the influence of a religious teacher however, often doubt has blossomed into disbelief, and the task of developing the spiritual life of the individual is increased ten or a hundredfold.

The disturbance of the emotional life of these lads due to inimical home conditions such as illegitimacy, drunkenness, and immorality on the part of the parents, separation of parents, lack of parental love and care, etc, in the light of modern knowledge, will have repercussions on their religious development, as well as other forms of maladjustment. Man is an anthropomorphic creature. Religious feelings have their origin in the feelings of children towards their parents. The earliest conception of God, is merely a projection of the child's idea of the father, and the qualities attributed to God, are those of the father. In a religious household, the first prayer taught to the child is "Our Father, which art in Heaven". The emotional attitude towards God is an extension, as it were of the child's attitude towards the father. Intellectually, the child passes through this phase of religious development, but the emotional attitude remains much the same, and may

colour his religious outlook through youth and manhood. In this distortion of the parent-child relationship, which is so common in these lads, may be sown the seeds of future heresy and atheism, or complete indifference to religion. An incident from real life, related to me, by the Chaplain, illustrates the importance of this aspect. After a service in which the theme was "The Prodigal Son", and, in which the loving welcome of the father for the return of the prodigal, was emphasised, two lads approached the Chaplain to discuss the sermon. One of them declared that it was no use expecting him to understand that, as it meant little to him. He had few recollections of his father, and those he had were anything but loving. All he remembered about him, was that he was always drinking, and he used to beat his brother and sister until they were glad to keep away from home as much as possible. The other lad agreed with him.

The majority of cases of religious conversion occur during adolescence, and Starbuck cites conclusive statistical evidence on this point. Religion may satisfy deep seated individual needs, and may be a source of the highest ideals and the sternest inhibitions.

As a channel of emotional expression, religion is of great value in the sublimation of sex urges, and this may help the adolescent through a period charged with sex difficulties and temptations, both from within and from without--i.e. from his companions. The invitation to sexual misconduct (and its acceptance) by contemporaries, is commoner than most people are willing to admit.

There still remains the ethical approach, however, and this is fully exploited, and accepted readily by many lads who are seemingly immune to the religious approach. This is particularly applicable to lads of superior calibre, who enter into discussions of such topics with great interest. Many a lad admits afterwards that he now sees where he went wrong, and resolves never to repeat the errors of the past.

To sum up, one is forced to the conclusion that religion, and religious instructors, are much more potent influences for good, than the lads realise.

10. The Punishment Rooms.

A dozen small rooms in a separate building called "B" Hall, are set aside for lads who have forfeited their privileges, and are undergoing punishment for breaches of discipline. The punishment which such lads undergo, consists, largely, of forms of frustration of the powerful gregarious and food-seeking instincts. The punishment may consist of solitary confinement alone, or be combined with a restricted diet, e.g. bread, porridge, and water. Exercise periods are of course, provided. On rare occasions, the use of a mattress is withheld for the first few days of punishment. On severe dietary restrictions the inmate is not compelled to work, but he is encouraged to occupy himself usefully. Under other conditions he is expected to do work, which may consist of chopping wood, breaking stones, or polishing buckets.

The influence of the punishment room, or "Chokey", as it is facetiously termed by the lads, is rated tenth in figure (I). Figure (II) illustrates that five lads rated it first, five as second, three as third, fourteen as fourth, eleven as fifth, and so on. The median value for the choices of 133 lads was between the eight and ninth positions, i.e., at 8.29.

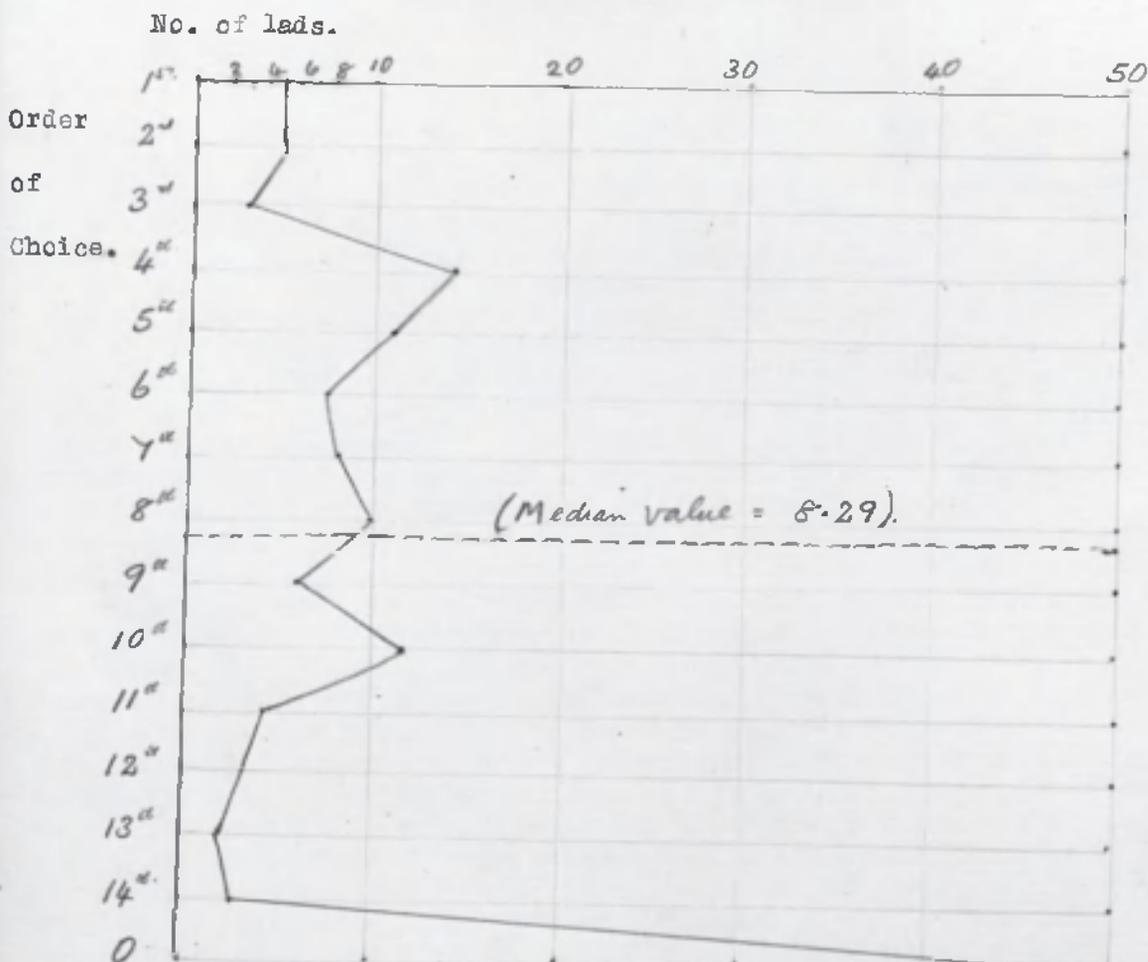
The efficacy of any form of punishment for offences against society, depends on its power to:-

- 1. Deter the individual concerned from repeating the offence.
- 2. Deter other people from committing the offence.
- 3. To protect society, by reforming the individual.

(1) need not be operative if (3) is operative, but the influence of (2) must remain, as long as anti-social behaviour is a menace. We cannot in

spite of many attempts to do so, make the punishment fit the crime in Gilbertian fashion, because the punishment must fit the individual. The modern aim is to make the punishment fit both the individual and the crime as far as possible and its results are very encouraging.

FIGURE 1]. THE PUNISHMENT ROOMS.



Man is too complex a creature for us to be able to forecast how he will react under certain circumstances. What is extremely disagreeable to one man may be a slight inconvenience to another and a source of pleasure to a third. Solitary confinement is a case in point. To the extreme extravert, if prolonged, it may be torture and endanger his mental health, while to the introvert, intolerant of unattractive associates, it may be a welcome opportunity for meditation and study. This is well borne out by a selection of opinions voiced during interviews. "I have been down once and that has kept me out of trouble. I didn't want a second dose". "The thought of it has kept me out of trouble". " "E" hall made no impression on me". "It is not deterrent to me but is to others". "It has not helped me, I am too impulsive. I lose my head and say things". "I found it a place of meditation and a deterrent". "I think it was a deterrent but it is now far less

deterrent since stone pounding was abolished". "It is not deterrent in itself, only the disgrace of it is". "It has kept me up to scratch although I have never been in it".

This collection of opinions is very representative of the attitude of the lads towards it and it can be confirmed. One lad stated that it had made him worse. On enquiry this proved to have been merely the result of a phase of resentment which soon passed off, and this lad ultimately did very well, being discharged on licence eighteen months after reception. Another lad remarked that he was "scared of it". This lad was of retarded character development, lacking in self confidence and backbone, and altogether not a robust personality. Apart from its wider influence as a reformatory agent, the value of "E" hall as a purely deterrent agent was investigated. Of the 133 lads, 93 or 69.9% declared that in their case it was definitely a deterrent. This included lads who had never experienced it, but had been deterred by the comments of others. 30.1% concluded that "E" hall was not a deterrent agent. This difference is highly significant statistically as calculated by the method of Loewenthal, and Wilson. The infliction of personal discomfort as part of a reformatory and deterrent process is therefore justified. It is apparent that this savours of the mailed fist, but it has to be remembered that this is only one of many influences acting simultaneously upon the lads, and any suggestion of intimidation or persecution is carefully avoided by discussion and free access to all members of the staff.

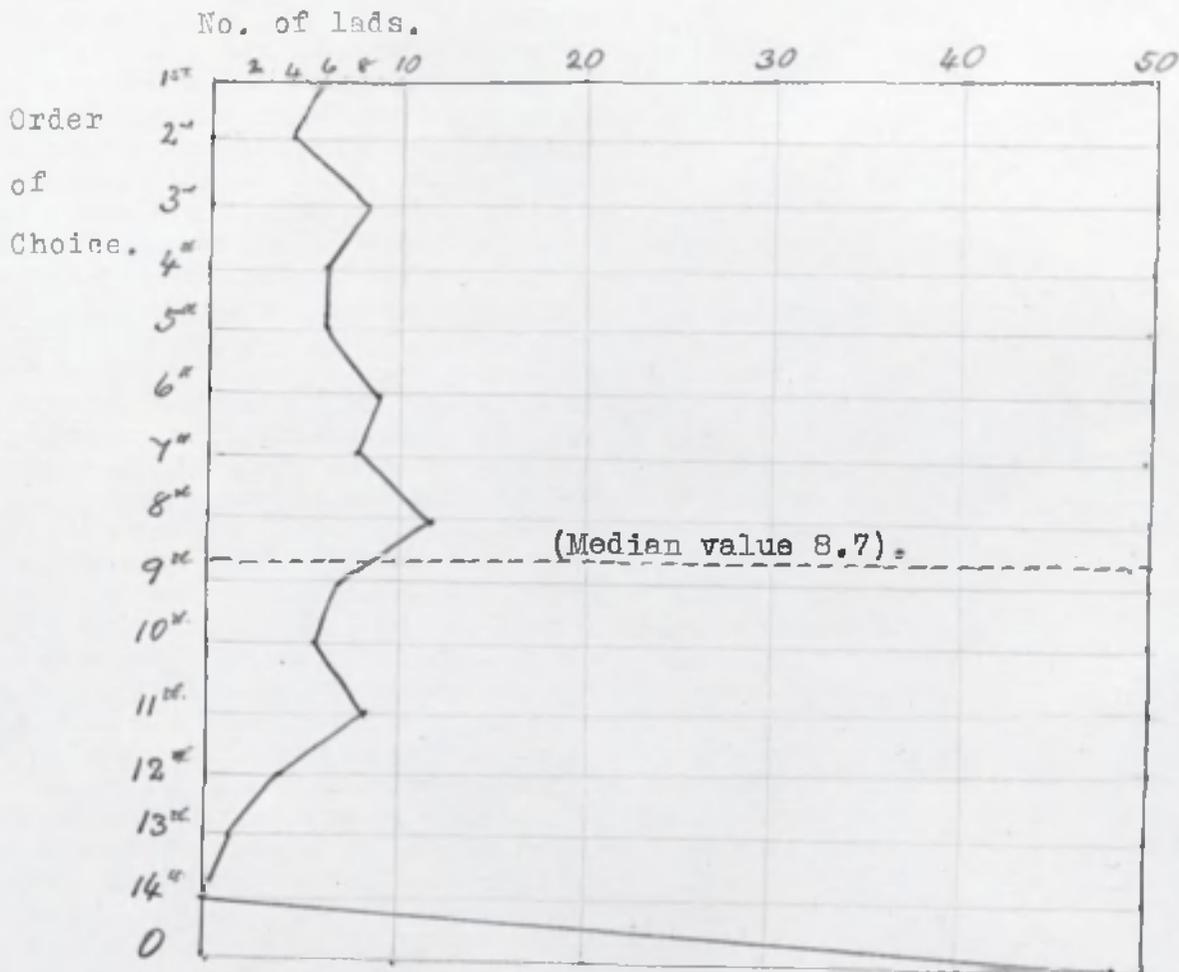
To approach the subject from another angle, many lads were asked whether in the interests of the institution, they would recommend the abolition of E. hall. Without exception, they all advocated its retention. The loss of the period of association with the other lads and staff, in the evenings, hit most lads severely. They were thrown on their own devices for several hours at a stretch, and even if they were not of a reflective type, meditation was forced upon them. Many lads stated afterwards, that once their initial anger and resentment had cooled off, the futility, and foolishness of their conduct became apparent to them, as they thought things over. They decided that, following the motto, illustrated by a sketch, displayed prominently on the wall of E. hall, "Cooperation is better than conflict". A few less practical lads tend to ruminate on the past, or daydream into the future. Books are always available.

In no case in the series did a lad show any ill-effects, physical or mental, from detention in the punishment rooms.

II. MATRON.

Each house has a matron, a lady of fairly mature years, who exercises a watchful eye on several aspects of the lads' institutional life.

The influence of the matron is rated eleventh in figure (I) by the lads. Figure (I2) (see next page) illustrates that 6 lads rated her influence as first, 4 as second, 8 as third, 6 as fourth, 6 as fifth, 9 as sixth, and so on. The median value for the choices of 133 lads was between the eight and ninth positions, i.e. at 8.7.



The influence of the matron can be considered under two heads.

(I) A strong personal influence exerted over a few lads.

Adolescence is a period of psychological weaning, in which a lad "finds himself" as it were, or blossoms into independant manhood. Emancipation from the authority of, and dependance on, the parents, should take place, and a capacity for adaptation to changing circumstances should develop. This process is not a uniform one, however, and in many cases is delayed, or never completed, as in the case of mother fixation. Such individuals tend to gravitate towards a kindly and sympathetic mother substitute, particularly if there are points of resemblance which facilitate the process of identification with the real mother, or a mother-ideal. A very confidential relationship may develop which may be of great value in solving a lad's individual difficulties, and she may attain great ascendancy over/

over certain lads, which may be used, and in this case is used, to mould and influence their character. In other cases a community of interests, as in literature and music, may be the attractive force, particularly when the matron is in the role of teacher. An interesting example of this type occurred about a year ago when two lads asked a matron, rather to her surprise, if she would read a Shakespearean play with them. She acceded and this became the nucleus of a small class which assiduously but pleasantly worked through several classics the whole of that winter.

(2). A much weaker influence exerted over a majority of lads.

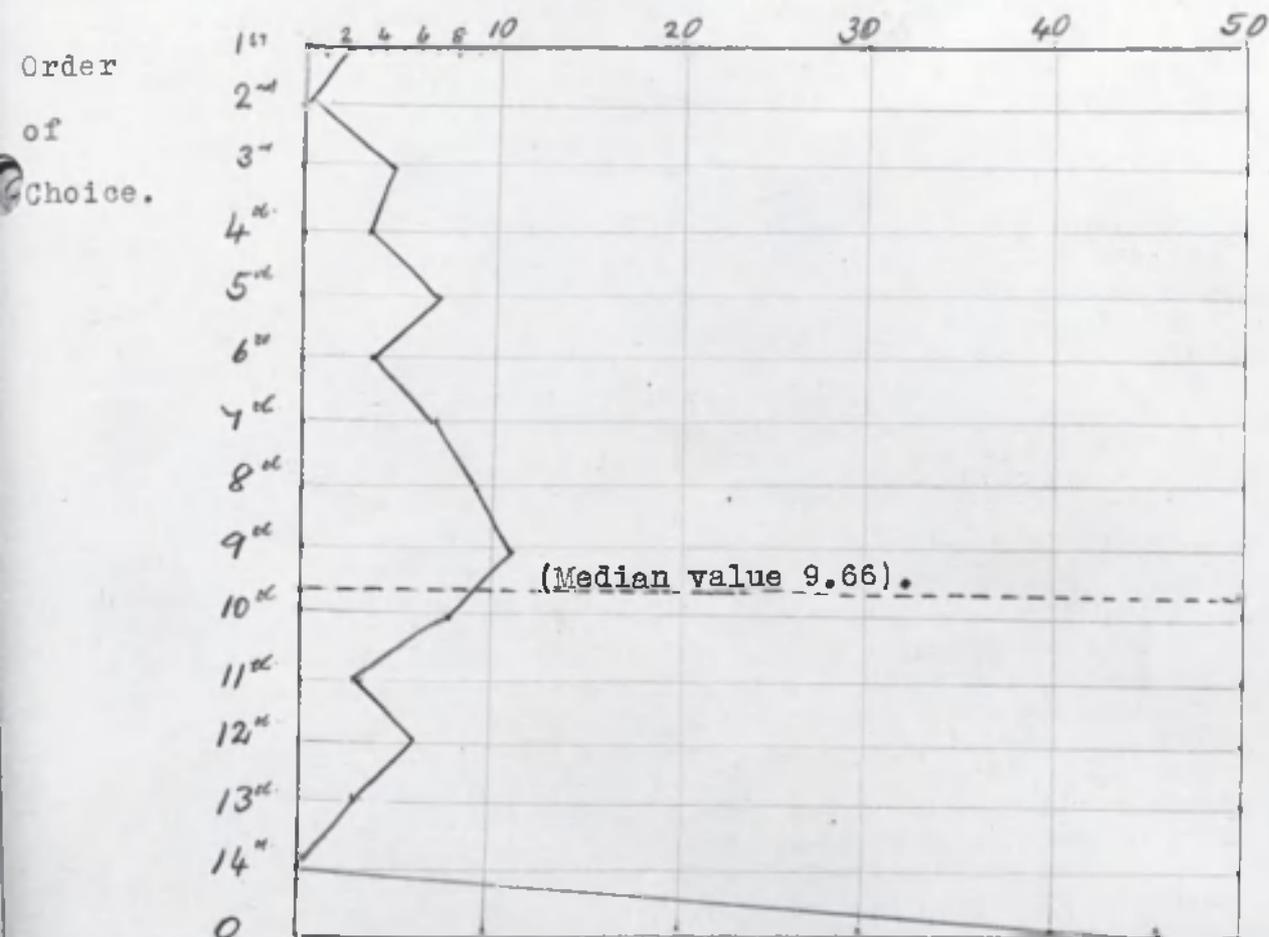
This second and much larger group of lads is more representative of the average Borstal lad, who tends to look askance at anything savoring of apron strings. On this type of lad however, although there may be very little contact, the presence of the matron seems to revive a sense of chivalry, and pride in his appearance and self respect. The matron is freely accorded prestige, respect and authority, although not always affection, and any lad who is guilty of failure in this connection is usually dealt with summarily by the lads themselves. In spite of the large group - 34 - who considered that the matrons had not been a helpful influence in making good, and the relatively low place accorded in Fig. 1, to the impartial observer there is no doubt that the presence of a matron of the right type is a refining and educative influence on all the lads. An interesting illustration of this, is the fact that while swearing is almost second nature to many of these lads, it is an unwritten law not to swear in the vicinity of the matron, and visible restraint in their language in her neighbourhood is often apparent.

12. EDUCATION.

Throughout the year but particularly during the winter months there are classes in all the usual subjects such as English, Arithmetic, foreign languages, etc. Many are voluntary but some are made compulsory, especially for lads of inferior education and intelligence. The influence of education as a reforming agent is rated twelfth on Fig. 1. In this case the series of lads is slightly smaller - 115. Fig. 13 (see next page) illustrates that two lads rated the influence of education as first, no lads rated it as second but five as third, four as fourth, seven as fifth, and so on. The median value for the choices of the 115 lads was between ninth and tenth positions, i.e. at 9.66. This expresses the low opinion of the lads of the value of education as available at Camp Hill, as a reforming influence. One cannot quarrel materially with their estimate for several reasons. When a healthy adolescent does a fairly strenuous eight hours working day, he cannot be expected to concentrate to a high degree on educational classes which encroach on his time for recreation and association in the evening, particularly if he is not keenly enthusiastic in the matter. Inferiority of education usually goes hand in hand with inferiority of intelligence. Such lads find

FIGURE 13. EDUCATION.

No. of lads.



the acquisition of fresh educational knowledge difficult, and they are easily discouraged, and apt to lapse into indifference. The real aim, however, is not merely to improve a lad's education, but to stimulate his mind to healthy activity, and the pursuit of knowledge which will be of permanent value to him in after life. Important as a good standard of education is, a more intensive development of the educational side of the Institution, at the expense of the more constructive character building measures, would be of doubtful value. A balance between the two extremes, should, however, be found. If the will to learn is strong enough, the student will find the time and opportunity, and will receive every encouragement. Intelligent lads of the better type take a keen interest in improving their education, and thereby acquire a breadth of outlook and knowledge, which acts as a stabilising influence. Moreover, they appreciate this themselves, and attribute part of their increased self-confidence to this.

13. THE INFLUENCE OF THE OTHER LADS.

The influence of the lads as a whole, on each individual lad, cannot be accurately evaluated either by the lads themselves, or by an observer, as there are so many constantly changing factors, such as the type of influence in different groups within the main body, the type of lad, and changes in the attitude and character of the lads themselves. It may generally be stated that over a period, lads tend to find their own level, and like seeks like. A few lads deliberately choose their own associates, and fewer still deliberately remain aloof from all the rest. The natural result of all this is, that the good type of lad, if he withstands early corruption, tends to improve still further, while the poorer type of lad, although he may not exactly deteriorate, tends to acquire much knowledge which he would be much the better of not knowing. The dissemination of knowledge of the arts of the criminal and the rouse can take place very rapidly, with comparatively brief contact. The view of Prof. Cyril Burt regarding this is interesting, as stated in "The Young Delinquent"

"Psychic contagion is far swifter than physical; and even in the corridors of the police-court or the halls of the receiving-home, irretrievable damage may be done in five minutes or less".

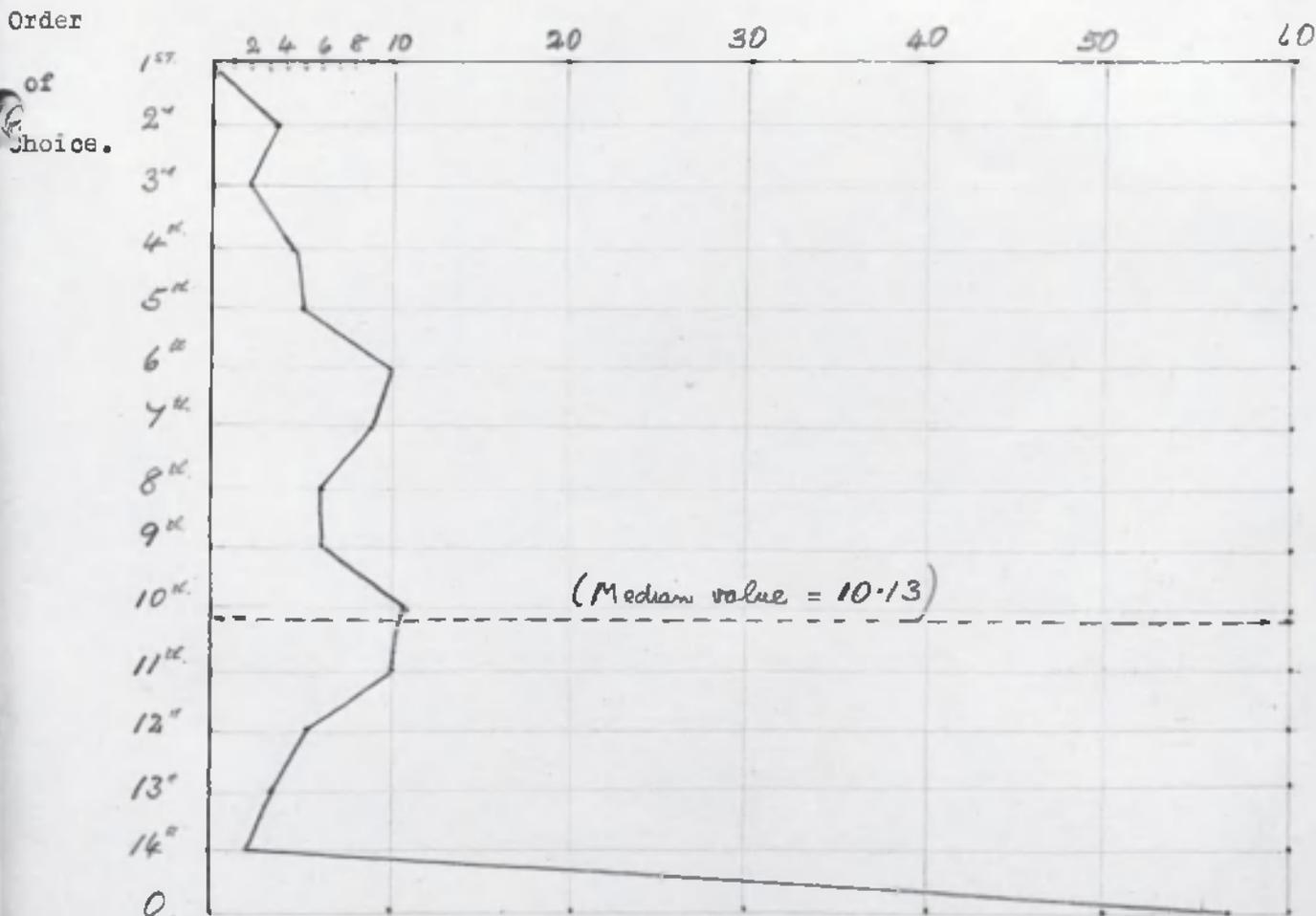
This is well borne out by the results of investigation into the topics of conversation which are most popular among the lads themselves when free from supervision. Here "sex", "sport", and "crime" predominate markedly. It is to be concluded, therefore, that the friendships formed by new lads on reception should be very carefully supervised in order to avoid corruption. Particularly is this so in the case of the younger more impressionable lads, and those whose history discloses that they are as yet, not deeply versed in crime. The importance of this is apparent when it is realised that many lads are sent to Borstal for oft-repeated offences of car-stealing for the purpose of joy-riding and bravado, and a number of such lads have never been convicted of other types of crime.

The influence of the other lads upon each individual lad interviewed, was, taken collectively, rated as fourteenth, as shown in figure (I). Figure (I4) illustrates that no lads rated it as first, 3 as second, 2 as third, 4 as fourth, 5 as fifth, 10 as sixth, and so on. The median value for the choices of 133 lads was between the tenth and eleventh places, i.e. at 10.13. (See next page.)

It is interesting that the lads themselves recognise that the influence of their contemporaries is of little reformative value and that 57 of the series or 44% rated it as of no value. Of this 57, 25 or 44%, declared emphatically that it was a bad influence. As one lad put it "They have a bad influence. I never used to swear until I came here." Against this must be placed the opinions of the 76 or 56% who stated that they got some measure of assistance in making good, from the influence of their contemporaries. Unfortunately the majority of this group were lads of poor calibre, and often inferior intelligence, who thus unwittingly brought out the negative value of their own influence, relative to the others. Water always flows from a high to a lower level. Lads of the better and more discriminating type almost invariably believed that in their own case, they had kept themselves immune from pernicious influences, but that the general influence of their fellows, outside their own immediate circle

FIGURE 14. THE INFLUENCE OF THE OTHER LADS.

No. of lads.



was bad. These views are almost entirely cross-sectional, but if we take a longitudinal view, -i.e. following the individual lads through their Borstal career, it is found that their influence on their associates will undergo radical changes for the better by the time they are on the threshold of discharge.

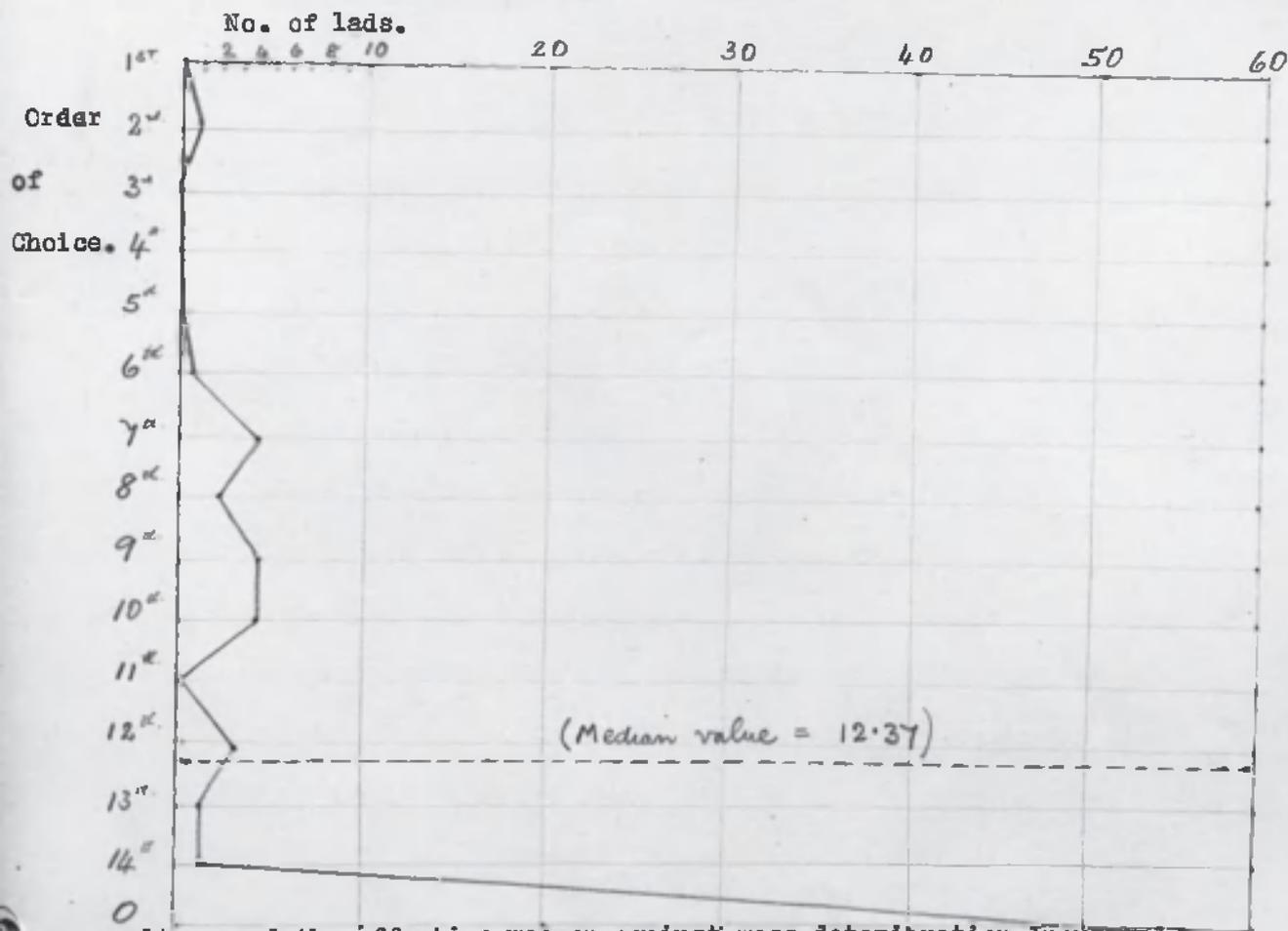
14. HOBBIES.

A number of lads expressed the opinion that certain activities best classed as hobbies, such as stamp-collecting, fretwork, basketwork, book-binding, music, art, etc., had exercised a reformative influence upon them.

The influence of hobbies was rated fifteenth, or last, in figure (1) by a series which consisted of 76 of the 133 lads. Figure (15) (see next page) illustrates that no lads rated this influence as first, one as second,

none as third, fourth, or fifth, one as sixth, and so on. 55 or 72% considered that it had been of no value as a purely reformative influence. While there is support for these findings, this is too narrow a view and it must be recognised that activities of the hobbies type, while they have a definitely constructive function, are not designed as reformative activities. Their function is to give the lads opportunities for self-expression, to develop their interests, and to occupy time which might otherwise be illspent, and in general, teach them the healthy and productive use of leisure. After all, this is the real basis of

FIGURE 15. HOBBIES.



culture and the effective weapon against mass deterioration. Increased leisure may be a danger to the individual and the community, of which he is a member, if it be used wrongly. The preparation for leisure occupation, as well as working hours, must have an important place in the functions of institutions which provide for both adolescent and adult education. With the advent of machinery and shorter working hours, and often unemployment, the problem of the use of leisure becomes increasingly important to these young

adults, and I cannot do better than to quote Prof. Burt in this connection:-

"Of the seven days of the week (Table 7) the first is evidently the day of crime. Nearly a quarter (23.8%) of the offences take place on a Sunday: and over one-fifth (21.3%) on a Saturday. Juvenile delinquency in London is thus very largely a mode of weekend dissipation. So long as there is neither school, nor work, mischief fills the empty hours. Many of the transgressions, it is true, are trifling, such as playing games at prohibited times, or in prohibited places. But on occasions, the loafing, the roistering, and the aimless wandering, lead the idler into depra-dations far more serious than a mere infringement of police regulations. And some of the more serious assaults and sex delinquencies, as well as a full proportion of pilfering, trespassing, and burglary, disturb the Sabbatical calm. After the lawless expansion of Sunday, the next two days are uneventful (Monday 8.3%, Tuesday 10%). There are signs of a transitory midweek increase

TABLE VII

RELATIVE NUMBER OF OFFENCES COMMITTED DURING EACH DAY OF THE WEEK.

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Total.
23.8	8.3	10.0	14.3	13.3	9.0	21.3		100.0

(Wednesday 14.3%, Thursday 13.3%) enhanced perhaps, by the half-holiday of certain schools on Wednesday, and the early closing of certain shops and businesses on Thursday. Friday once more seems almost as tranquil as Monday (9.0%).....Four-fifth of the offences are committed after 4pm., more than half of them in the periods just before, or just after tea-time, and the point of greatest frequency, falls in the first short period of leisure on the way back from school or business". (The Young Delinquent- pp. 159-160).

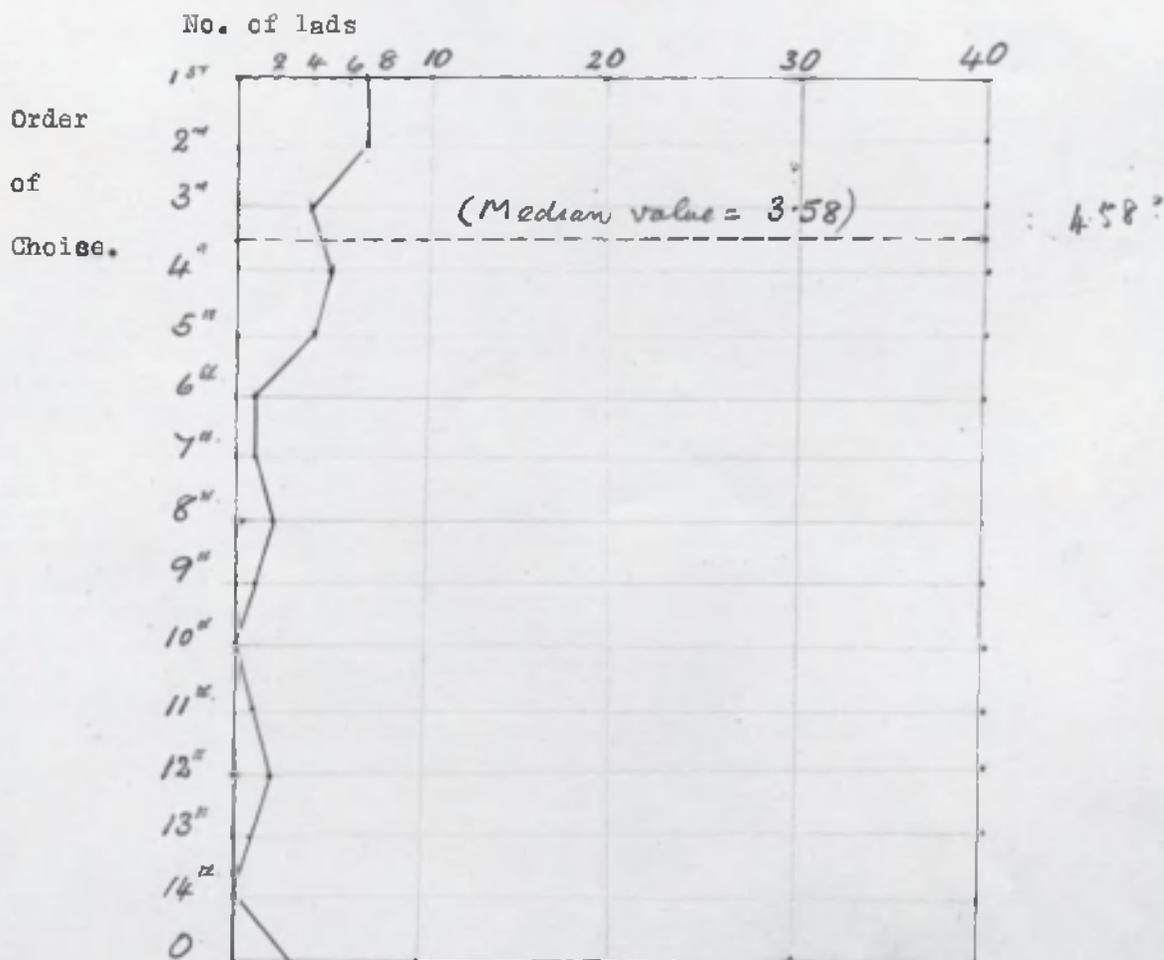
15. THE INFLUENCE OF OUTSIDE CONTACTS.

This embraces a number of influences of which the chief is letters and visits from relatives. Other related influences of this type, are walks (under supervision) in the neighbourhood, visits to functions outside the Institution such as Church services, giving gymnastic displays at entertainments in the vicinity, and occasional contacts with officers homes while working at the repair and decoration of officers houses. The importance of this factor only became apparent well through the course of the/

investigation, and, as a series of only forty cases was standardised, this aspect has been left to the end.

After making the necessary allowances for the differing number of lads in the series, this influence is rated as fifth in Fig.1. Fig.16 illustrates that of the forty lads, seven rated it

FIG.16 THE INFLUENCE OF OUTSIDE CONTACTS.



as first, seven as second, four as third, five as fourth, four as fifth, one as sixth, and so on. The median value for the choices of the forty lads was between fourth and fifth place, as a reformative influence, i.e. at 4.58. Only three or 7.5% rated it as of no value and for clearly obvious reasons. Lad (1) had no parents or siblings. Lad (2) to quote his own words "It's not very often I get a letter". Lad (3) was a lad of poor moral calibre and not very amenable to inspiration of this type.

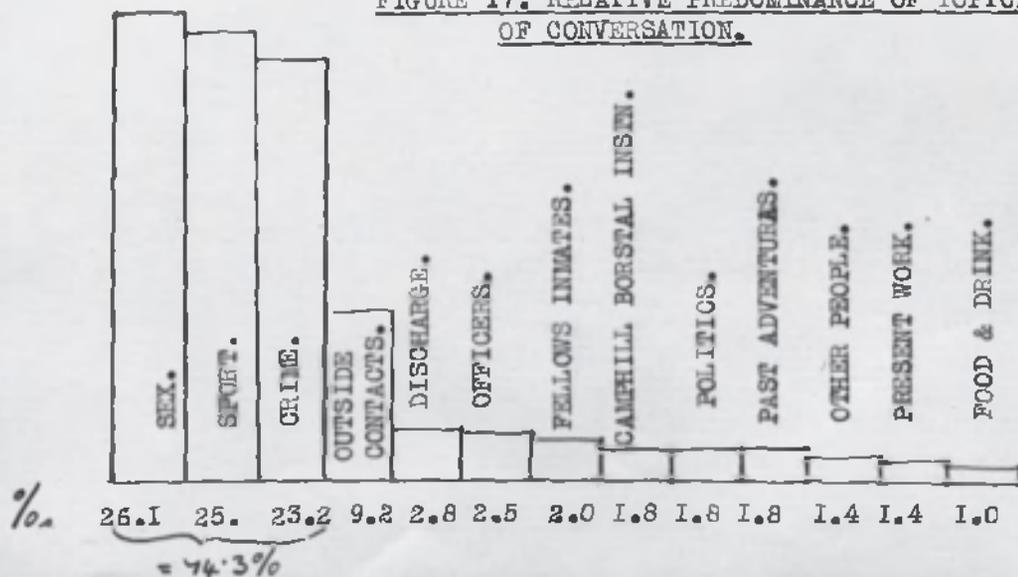
The bulk of the lads appreciate letters and visitors from home tremendously and are greatly helped and encouraged by these contacts with all those whom they hold dear. As one lad put it "I am determined to make good for my parents sake".

Another lad, referring to the people he saw while on the weekly outdoor walk stated, with unerring, if unconscious accuracy, "It stimulates me to be like the outside people". These things, while they provide outlets for pent-up emotions and familial feeling, act largely by contrasting their lack of freedom, and the disadvantages of their lot, with the desirable state of liberty possessed by the rest of society, and thereby provide a strong incentive to make good and to regain all that they have lost. There is nothing which will compensate adequately the loss of liberty and the normal reaction is to strive to regain it. By suitable encouragement and judicious concessions, much use can be made of this potent force. The experiment of sending a number of picked lads home to spend Christmas with their family, and the successful response to this, is recalled.

PREDOMINANT TOPICS OF CONVERSATION.

The prevailing topics of conversation of the lads, when out of hearing of the officers and staff, and remote from supervision, must be reckoned as an important group influence, and these were accordingly investigated in a series of fifty lads. At first considerable difficulty was experienced in getting reliable data, and much material had to be discarded. Even though a confidential relationship between investigator and lad was obtained, the resistance to confession of activities likely to provoke disapproval or disgust, was too great, and it became obvious that reliable data could only be obtained if the subject was left out of it. The enquiry was then modified and took the form of frank discussion of what the majority of the lads, excluding the lad himself, talked about when free from the hearing and supervision of the staff. This led to complete frankness on the subject, and the lad was finally asked to enumerate, in order of frequency, the three most common topics of conversation. The results are shown diagrammatically in Fig. 17, for 50 lads.

FIGURE 17. RELATIVE PREDOMINANCE OF TOPICS OF CONVERSATION.



From this it will be seen that the three topics of sex, sport, and crime, overshadow all others. On reducing the relations to a percentile basis for the purposes of comparison, it will be seen that sex, sport, and crime in the aggregate, amount to 74.3%, while sex and crime together, two subjects which must be viewed with considerable uneasiness, amount to 49.3%. That these three topics should shew this incidence is not surprising when one considers the age distribution of the lads - adolescent and immediately post-adolescent - always a period of heightened sex feeling - and their recent environment and habits. In this connection, it is worth noting that Goring, in his monumental work "The English Convict", established that first convictions for sexual offences rise sharply (much more sharply than for other types of crime) in the age group 15-20, reach a peak between the ages of 20 to 25, and then gradually decline. Crime - or "jobs" - as the lads term it, is of great importance as a topic, since it forms the chief avenue of dissemination of the arts of the criminal, among all too ready pupils. There is reason to believe that new lads, in particular, gain immense self-satisfaction from relating exploits of criminal daring, and posing as "big shots". As a lad's training advances, these two topics tend to be relegated into the background, especially by the better type of lad, and sport tends to assume the predominant role. In this direction will be seen a line well worth developing, and the displacement of the topics of sex and crime, into the background, as far as possible, should be undertaken by all possible means. This brief exposition shows the great value of teaching these young adults how best to use their leisure, for example, by a more intensive development of hobby activities, and games, both indoor and outdoor, always keeping in the foreground the necessity of using existing interests, or of promoting new interests. A hobby or game in which a lad takes part unwillingly, is worse than useless. Another line of attack which might be more intensively developed, is the creation of a "code", or standard, in this respect by first of all setting the necessary standards to the group-leaders (or prefects), who, in turn, would set the standards for the rank and file, and, when necessary, take active measures against the worst offenders. Corruption, a bete noire of all institutions of this type, would by these and other means, be kept at a minimum.

CONCLUSION

If justification were necessary for this study, the most important ground would be the importance of striving to the utmost to arrest the development of potential criminals while the conditions are still favourable. Exceptional promise, in all fields of human endeavour, if it is going to appear at all, usually appears early, and crime is no exception to this rule. It is not meant by this that age is a natural determinant of crime, but rather, that a relative incapacity to keep, or a relative predisposition to break, the law, like most human predispositions, tends to appear at the earliest opportunity. The great majority of recidivists

are first convicted between the ages of 15 and 20, and, to a lesser extent, 20 to 25, (see figure 18). If we are to thin the ranks of recidivism, it is on these age groups that we must

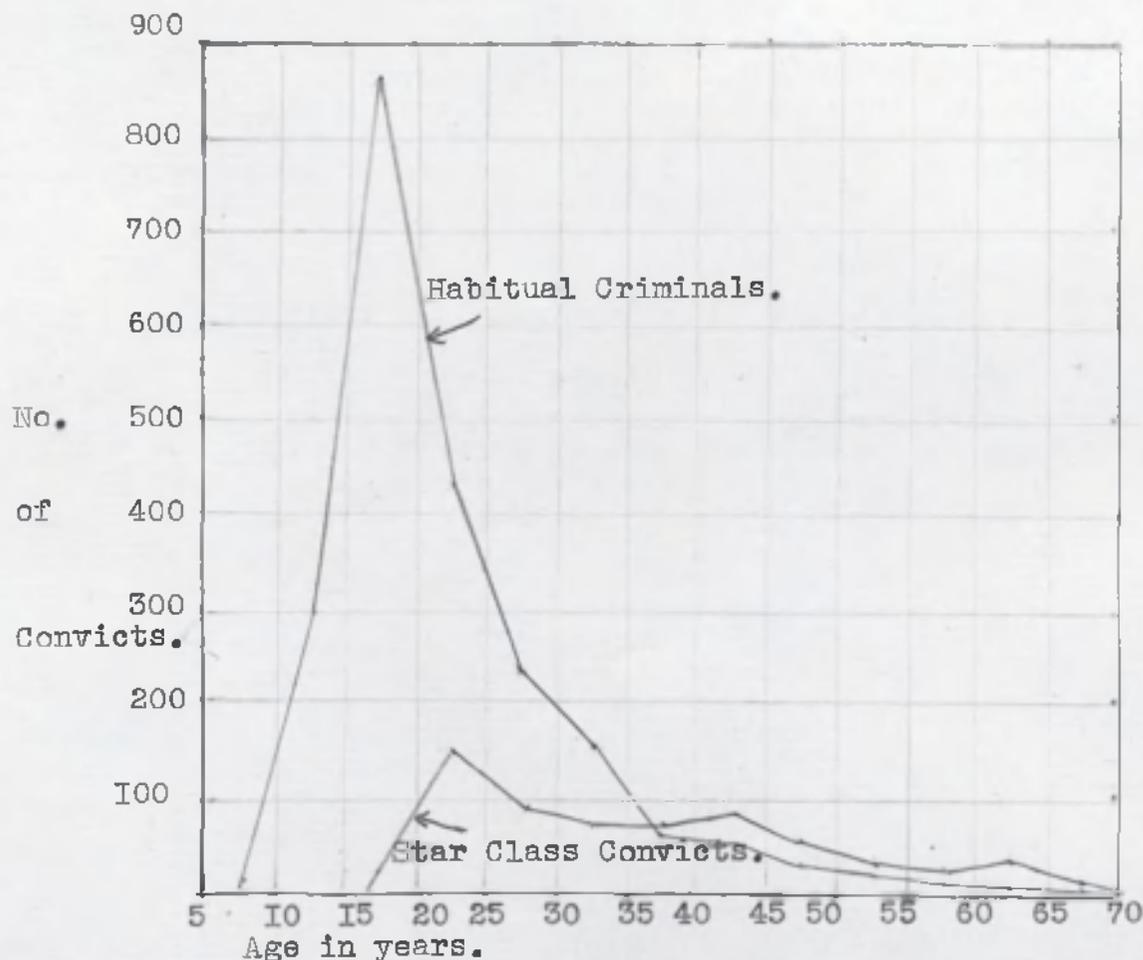


Fig. 18. Age distribution at first conviction, of 2204 habitual criminals, and 682 star class convicts (first offenders convicted of serious crime). (Adapted from "A Statistical Study of the English Convict" by Charles Goring).

Concentrate our efforts. No startling new facts have been uncovered by this investigation, but there is satisfaction in knowing that there is some factual evidence for what has hitherto been assumed to be true. The series is smaller than was originally intended, owing to the intervention of the Second European War, but certain conclusions are at least indicated, and, where/

in the opinion of the writer, the evidence seems to justify it, certain constructive suggestions have been put forward. In conclusion, it seems desirable to stress a truth which is fundamental to all work in this field, and that is that a reformative system, is not a system in the ordinary sense of the term. It is a collection of individuals working wholeheartedly, and as a team, for a common goal, and the results which accrue, are in proportion to the earnestness with which they apply themselves to the task.

Within each lad lies the potentiality for good. Without stands the natural right of every child born into this world, the right to possess every opportunity he needs to develop into a decent citizen. Perhaps on the signpost is written "More workers, more earnestness."

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