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My connection with the National Committee on Prisons & Prison Labor was only one of my activities in that work. Quite aside from this committee for the past twenty years I have been greatly interested in the general subject of the prevention of crime, the proper treatment of prisoners, that they should be so treated that they are likely to be able to take care of themselves and their families after their discharge and not spread disease either physical or mental, with no bitter feeling against criminals or prisoners. Some crimes or so-called crimes may be justified, and if not, outside conditions which are beyond the control of the criminals may have brought about the criminal act. In many instances if we can remove these outside conditions which brought about the criminal act it may bring about a cure. The causes of the crime may be ill health, or addiction to drugs or liquor, or bad surroundings or lack of education, improper home training, uncontrollable temper, lack of self-control either inherited or otherwise, which sometimes can be cured. But whatever may be the cause, we deal with existing conditions which can be modified by the proper determent and their causes and effects should be thoroughly studied. Cure and avoidance for the future should be brought about if possible without our losing our temper, without bitterness or anger, and we ought to calmly consider what is best to be done to get the best results. Scientific research should be applied in all cases. The causes of crime should be determined before the trial, the verdict to take the causes into consideration. Altogether as soon as the prisoner enters prison the general condition, the past history and cause of the crime should be taken into consideration when the treatment of the prisoner
in prison is to be determined, and each individual case should be treated in such a way that it is likely to bring about the best results. It should be determined what kind of work will bring about the best results in each case, each prisoner to be employed constantly, but not overworked, some remuneration to be given prisoners for their work and all hope for betterment in the future not to be taken away from the prisoner. I think that the late prison riots were caused partly by such treatment that all hope of reward for the future was taken away from the prisoners, making them desperate. We should remember that nearly all the prisoners some time or other must come out of the prisons and become part of the general community, so the object should be to create normal conditions. If we have many abnormal persons in the general community it naturally will create abnormal conditions, which are very disturbing and create a bad influence. Let us assume that about 200,000 people in the United States are constantly lodged in some prison or correctional institution. About that number must go back to the general public every year, and allowing say twenty years life for the discharged prisoner, there must be 4,000,000 people among the general populace who some time or other have been in a prison or correctional institution. That shows that this matter is not only of interest to the people in prison but in reality to the general community. Naturally all the people who are now in prison must have been children or young people fifteen or twenty years ago - older ones of course in proportion. They could not have been criminals as children. If these children and young people had been properly treated, had got the right surroundings, education and facilities for health and happiness, they might not likely be in prison now or only a small
part of them. In the ordinary course of events about a similar number will go into prisons yearly within the next fifteen or twenty years, so that a large part of the three or four million children and young people must now be in our midst who are going to prison gradually during those future years. The importance of the treatment of children and young people can therefore not be overestimated. Boy scouts and Girl scouts, good facilities to play and exercise, proper playgrounds, amusements for children, good example, the right education, good teachers, are all good influences. But more or less all of that is indirect. If we can bring direct influence on people who are now in prison and on those who are likely to engage in criminal work, it should have good results. That is my individual thought on this subject, which I think should be taken into consideration although not following the regular penology — a new thought that I would like to bring into this subject, changing our attitude entirely from that which has been usually taken in this work.

There is much misunderstanding on the subject of prisons and prisoners. A large part of the public have never visited a prison, or if they have, have not come in direct contact with the prisoners. Many people think prisoners are dangerous, or if not that, have a bitter feeling of resentment against prisoners and do not want to have anything to do with them. Others again who are sentimental about the subject fear the bad impression it makes on them to come in contact with the prisoners. People forget that there is not much difference between the people in prison and the people outside. It is very different from people who have a dangerous illness where infection is likely or possible. People naturally fear contact with a
A person in prison is on an average just as sound as those outside. If the prisoners have done something that they ought not to have done - broken some law, if some have committed serious criminal acts, others lighter ones, there is no infection to be feared, and they can be swayed by good influences to abandon their criminal career and go straight. They are just as sound and sane as anybody outside can be.

Now, reverting to what I said before about playgrounds and other good influences for children and young people, that of course is very important, but it is an indirect way. In addition to that it would be desirable if we could induce people who intend to carry out a criminal act to abandon same, so that they will never be criminals. That would save the necessity of putting persons under arrest and bringing them before the courts for trial, then if they are convicted to have the prisons to put them in and build more of them if we do not have enough, and everything else that belongs to it. The natural answer to that will be that it is difficult, perhaps almost impossible, to find out anybody who is on the way to become a criminal and to stop him from becoming such. Many detectives and police and others employed in that kind of work do know a good many of the underworld; they sometimes try to find out where some of the criminal acts are intended to be done, but so far the aim of those engaged in the work of detection is mostly to detect and punish criminals after the criminal act has been committed. For that the detectives and police are rewarded but not for trying and succeeding in having the intended avoid committing the criminal act. Some years ago a Governor of the State
of New York who had been District Attorney previously was supposed to have been elected to the office of Governor because he brought a man charged with the commission of murder to the chair. If he had managed to induce this same man who was supposed to have committed the murder not to commit it, for that he would not have been rewarded and would not have been elected to the office of Governor for having avoided the commission of the act by this man. One place where it is possible and perhaps not too difficult to influence people not to commit another crime is in the prisons themselves, by inducing the prisoners who are now in prison, and if necessary forcing them, to abandon a criminal career. The Baumes Law is intended to reduce the likelihood of repetition of crime by prisoners after their discharge. In some instances it works out well but not often. It is difficult to avoid repetition of crime by a threat. People are apt to take their chances. The jay-walker, who is not a criminal, takes his chances that the automobile is not going to run over him. If it did it would probably kill him or seriously hurt him, but he takes his chances. I have visited prisons constantly since many years so as to keep in touch and be posted. I find that the best way to avoid prisoners continuing their criminal career would be by proper influence. If many high grade people could devote themselves to induce and persuade the prisoners to avoid criminal acts they would succeed in doing much good in that direction. Finding places for discharged prisoners in industries is very good work, but it is better yet to use the right influence, treatment and education of the prisoners in prison, so that after their discharge they are likely to be able to take care of themselves
and families. Altogether it is difficult to reach the supposed criminal before he has committed the act and to manage to have him give it up and not do the wrong thing, but there are a good many difficult tasks accomplished outside of prison and work with criminals. Wonderful inventions constantly come forward and are worked out successfully, but we are going only at a very slow gait in the improvement of how to treat the prisoner and to avoid crime. In the industries we have made wonderful progress in extracting the by-products and using them to add greatly to our comforts and to the benefit of the general community.

Strange as this statement may seem, there is much talent hidden in many of the prisoners. In many cases they have undertaken difficult tasks often avoiding detection for many years, often displaying great courage and cleverness to succeed in what they wanted to do, until they are finally caught. If we could guide this ability which is working in the wrong way to make it useful in the right direction, it would be a benefit. The most wonderful things have been accomplished outside of prison work and criminality. Perhaps we can do better in the future in the direction of reducing crime and avoiding criminality, and where it has taken place, in the proper treatment to lead the prisoners in the right instead of the wrong direction, which has so far not been successfully accomplished.

There was a time years ago when it was thought if anybody does not pay his debts, no matter for what reason, he would have to go into prison or jail. We read in Dickens and other authors, who tell of some people in jail who were otherwise kindly and right in every respect, while others who were rather wicked managed not to be caught in not paying their bills and did not have to go to jail. The old idea was "What can we do. If
that was not the rule nobody would pay their bills." We have made improvement in that one direction, by bankruptcy laws and other arrangements, by which this matter can be straightened out without sending people to jail. I think there is less insolvency now than there was in former years.

I think we ought to be able to distinguish between dangerous prisoners and those who are not dangerous or likely to commit acts of violence. Many of the latter could be placed on probation, instead of sending them to prison. Proper probation officers could be placed in charge, and if the culprit does not act right, he could then be put in prison. This is one of the ways in which the overcrowding of prisons which is now taking place could be relieved. Perhaps if we put too many unlawful people on probation without keeping them in prison the deterrent effect might be lost, and so in cases where probation is not advisable and not sufficient punishment many of the prisoners who either have not committed any act of violence or are not likely to any more than any other person in the general community, could be placed in simple cottages or bungalows somewhere in the country where land is cheap and put at outdoor work, profitable and suitable. As a rule people like to keep their liberty and do not like to be kept prisoners even in cottages in the country as above described. They could there be taught work that they can use after their discharge, but should work for the maintenance and cost of being held, so that the State would save the cost of holding prisoners and the State would also save the building of these large stone and iron buildings. There are now in existence a number of cottage plan institutions for dependent children and also for...
delinquent children - The Juvenile Asylum, the Jewish Protective and many others, which are quite a success and much better than the former barrack system. The number of people in the regular prisons would be greatly reduced and also it would have the benefit of not mixing dangerous hardened prisoners with those guilty of lighter offenses.

It is well to make a distinction between first offenders and those that have been in prison before, but only to a degree. After all the first offender may have already committed many other crimes and may be a very bad one who has not been caught before this first time, as against some irresponsible, stupid fellow, perhaps not very bad, who might have been caught in several cases. There has also to be taken into consideration that a real bad criminal who has been caught in that one instance, if his first offense is a serious one, would get a sentence for a longer term, and therefore would not have opportunity to be a second offender or a third offender so soon as the other one who had only a very short term. We have to take more into consideration the individual cases than the general classification.

In my work and the interest I take in criminality and the prison question I have no feeling of anger or revenge against the offender. I have no feeling for coddling the prisoners as often charged against prison reformers. I am not even optimistic in believing that a person who once commits a crime is not likely to do so maybe again. I am sorry for the prisoners because it is a very hard thing to be deprived of liberty and a terrible punishment for people to be made prisoners and very difficult to ever get over it, but of course that
cannot be helped and there is often a great deal of trouble for people outside of prison. I believe that if we put the same ingenuity that we use in other kinds of work into prison reform and get away as much as possible from former prejudices, that we can get much better results in the future than those which now exist. One thing is very important in getting results in prison work, that is that those in charge should be a good example, and therefore it would be advisable to try and employ as high grade people as possible to be in charge of the prisoners - Wardens, Keepers, and other employees. It is a great help if those in charge are just and do absolute justice to the prisoners and deal fairly with them. One of the principal reasons for the last prison riots was that suddenly paroles, which they had been entitled to for good behavior, were withdrawn. They found there was injustice there. The longer terms and particularly also the withdrawing of their paroles gave them the feeling that no matter what they did there was no way of their getting appreciation and all hope was gone.

I repeat as I have said in my former articles that we ought to have the best kind of people in charge of prisons, that their services should be well paid for, that they should be well trained in that work, that if they do their work well it should be appreciated by the public and that the position should be considered an honorable one.