

8. Criminology.

Classification of Prisoners. (*Psychiat. Quart.*, vol. vii, p. 369, July, 1933.)
McCartney, J. L.

Of 1,046 new prisoners admitted to the Elmira Reformatory in 1932, 32·8% were diagnosed as mentally normal, 24·2% as feeble-minded, 7·5% as psychotic or potentially so, and 35·5% as neuropathic. The author pleads for an extension to prisons of the parole system, which has proved so successful in mental hospital life. He is convinced that prisoners should be dealt with as mentally sick individuals who, because of some physical, social, intellectual or mental handicap, have been adjudged anti-social.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

The Relation Between Nutrition, Mental Level and Adjustment in Delinquent Boys. (*Journ. of Nerv. and Ment. Dis.*, vol. lxxvii, p. 123, Aug., 1933.) Molitch, M., and Eccles, A. K.

This study of 554 delinquent boys at the New Jersey State Home confirmed the finding of Healy that the delinquent boy is not the under-nourished boy. There was no significant difference in general mental level or in overt behaviour between those who were well nourished and those who were under-nourished. The under-nourished group exhibits a shade of disadvantage in both mentality and in quality of social adjustment.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Delinquency and Primogeniture. (*Psychol. Clinic*, vol. xxii, p. 48, March-May, 1933.) Armstrong, C. P.

A group of 991 boys was examined at the clinic of the Children's Court at New York City from the point of view of primogeniture as one possibly determining factor in delinquency. The only class of offences in which any unusual incidence of primogeniture was found was that which contained children who were unmanageable at home or had deserted from home. Jealousy of younger children, greater responsibility thrust upon the eldest child in families of low economic status, and exploitation of the eldest child, may all enter into the problem. It is the eldest boy in a specific setting who is apt to revolt against home authority.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

A Study of Criminals' Conversations. (*Psychol. Clinic*, vol. xxii, p. 61, March-May, 1933.) Powell, N.

The assumption may be made that what people talk about reflects their essential interests and thoughts. Records of 485 scraps of conversation among prisoners in Sing Sing Prison, New York, are analysed and compared with similar data from non-criminal individuals. Home is the most frequent topic of conversation among the prisoners; weather comes next in frequency; money and sport are far less frequent than in outside life. A decided trend is observable; the prisoner is most interested in getting out of prison. Analysis of conversation may be a fruitful method of determining how a penal institution affects its inmates.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

The Trial of Guiteau. (*Amer. Journ. Psychiat.*, vol. xiii, p. 127, July, 1933.) Fenning, F. A.

In 1881 President Garfield was assassinated by Charles J. Guiteau. The defence raised at the trial was that of insanity. No fewer than 36 medical witnesses were called, 23 for the prosecution and 13 for the prisoner. The defence was not successful, either at the original trial or on appeal, and Guiteau was hanged. The article gives a brief survey of the evidence. There would appear to have been much to support the plea of insanity. But the medical testimony was divided, very eminent men giving evidence on either side.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.