5. Sociology.

The Estimation of Intellectual Development in Young Female Criminals [*La mesure du développement intellectuel chez les jeunes delinquantes*]. (*L'Ann. Psychol.*) *Sullivan, W. C.*

This paper comprises the results obtained from the application of Binet and Simon's method to some 119 female inmates of Holloway prison.

In his preliminary remarks, Dr. Sullivan identifies himself with those who deny the existence not only of a typical criminal body, but of a typical criminal mind, "except of course in the same sense as one can speak of a medical or legal mind," and points out that crime is often the expression of the sane and normal impulse of self-preservation. He adds, however, that abnormal psychological states tend to create a predisposition towards anti-social acts, and that therefore an appreciable proportion of prison populations will be found poorly equipped, intellectually and affectively, and asserts the desirability of the segregation of these from other criminals, especially in view of the modern tendency of penitentiary administration to become reclamatory rather than vindictive and repressive. The method of Binet and Simon he regards as admirably adapted for such an estimation of the mental weakness as is therefore needed.

The cases considered have been girls from 16 to 25 years old in whom there has been some reason for suspecting mental enfeeblement, and they have been divided into six classes as follows:

(1) *Non-criminals* (those adjudged not guilty, or guilty only of minor offences, and cases of concealment of birth).—These furnished striking differences of intellectual level ranging from that of a child of $5\frac{1}{2}$ years to that of a child of 15, the latter being the highest level tested for. This group supplied a case of lower level than any, but owing to exceptionally favourable environment the girl earned her living by honest manual labour. The average was that of a child, of 11·5 years.

(2) *Prostitutes.*—These were most often of an intellectual level of 10 or 12 years. One only reached that of 15, and the least intelligent did not quite get up to 8.

(3) *Habitual criminals* (offenders who have undergone several sentences for crimes with a view to profit).—Dr. Sullivan prefers the word "habitual" to "professional" in this connection, considering that the latter would convey too much, and suggest a degree of facility in the *rôle* which all habitual offenders do not possess.

Much diversity of intelligence was found in this class. In 11 cases it worked out between the levels of 10 and 12 years, in 6 cases between those of 12 and 15, while 5 passed the tests above 15 years of age including in three cases that of *decoupage*. The last named were all professional criminals who had attained to some distinction in their business.

(4) *Occasional criminals* (those who have undergone only one or two sentences).—The intention here was to form a group whose crimes were due to a passing weakness rather than to the commencement of a life of crime, but as their average age was lower than in the preceding group, the explanation of their lesser criminal records may be in some cases

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simply their youth. Here the intellectual development shows still more diversity, ranging from the levels of 9 to 15 years.

(5) *Impulsives* (those whose crimes disclosed no interested motives, and whose temperament was stigmatised by an excessive instability manifesting itself especially in feeble inhibitory powers).—The majority of these were in prison for suicidal attempts, and in most cases approximated to the non-criminal class in their histories and habits. Apart from the acts dependent on their morbid impulsiveness they showed no anti-social tendencies. In this group, more than half reached a level above twelve years, although one was clearly feeble-minded.

(6) *Moral imbeciles* (those exhibiting anti-social tendencies in various ways fr m infancy).—These are marked out by their excitable and intractable temperament, are thieves and liars, wilfully cruel, lacking in natural affection, and show at an early age morbid propensities to sexual vice. Their criminal acts are distinguished by a characteristic cynicism, and by malicious monkey-like tricks. In contra-distinction to the other classes, their exaggerated variety made them refractory to examination in two cases. Out of six others four showed an intellectual level above twelve years.

In his summary, Dr. Sullivan goes on to a criticism of some of the tests, but regards the method on the whole of much practical value, as fixing the diagnosis and giving it an objective base, the latter being especially desirable when advice has to be justified before people unacquainted with psychiatry. The examination corrects too favourable impressions on the one hand, and on the other prevents what simply depends on playing truant from school being put under the heading of mental weakness. The author concludes by pointing out that his deductions indicate that the *rôle* of mental debility, in the intellectual sphere at least, has not all the importance sometimes attributed to it in the genesis of crime, and that the pathological mental element is more likely to be found on the affective side. NAPIER PEARN.

Forms of Mental Defect. (*Published by the Medical Officers of Schools Association. London: J. & A. Churchill*, 1913.) *Langmead, F.*

This is a report of a paper read and discussed at a meeting of the Medical Officers of Schools Association last November.

Dr. Langmead, after some general remarks on the difficulties of classifying amentia at the present stage of our knowledge of the subject, suggests as a provisional scheme a division under the following heads:

(1) Primary amentia:
- Genetous (or simple).
- Microcephalic.
- Mongolism.

Epileptic?

(2) Secondary amentia:
- Traumatic, vascular, toxic, infective (paralytic).
- Sclerotic.
  - Atrophic.
  - Macrocephalic.
  - Nodular or tuberous.

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