

**Later Criminal Careers.** By Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck. New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1937. Pp. xi, 403. \$3.00.

In 1930 the Gluecks published *500 Criminal Careers*, which was a report on the behavior, in relation to criminal law, of 510 men during the five years following their release from the Massachusetts Reformatory. As most of these men had been released on parole it might have been expected that their conduct subsequent to release would be rather better than that of persons otherwise released. But the amount of criminality attributable to that group during the five years as shown by the Gluecks' research is appalling. At the end of that first 5 years 454 men were still alive, 85 of them again in penal institutions. This new volume by the Gluecks presents their discoveries from investigation of the lives of these 454 during the five years following the close of the first five-year study. And again the amount of crime committed by those men is perturbing, though not so serious as during the first five years after the original release from prison.

"During the second period our 454 men were arrested 955 times, while during the first this same group of men had been arrested 938 times. The average number of arrests among those arrested during the second period was 3.71 ( $\pm .12$ ) as compared with 3.3 ( $\pm .11$ ) in the first five-year period. Of the 955 arrests which occurred during the second period, half (51.3 per cent) were for drunkenness, an increase in the proportion of arrests for drunkenness as compared with the first period when 41.4 per cent of all arrests were for this offense. Almost one-fifth of the arrests in the second period (17.2 per cent) were for offenses against the public health, safety, and policy, such as vagrancy, violation of license laws, disturbing the peace, gaming, profanity, being idle and disorderly, and the like. During the first five-year period a like proportion of arrests (17.9 per cent) had been for similar offenses. In Period II offenses against property amounted to only 17.3 per cent of the total number, as compared with 26 per cent during the first five-year period. This designation refers largely to larcenies, burglaries, pickpocketing, receiving stolen goods, possessing burglar's tools, robbery, and similar offenses. In Period II 4.1 per cent of the arrests were for offenses against family and children, a category which usually refers to arrests for non-support, desertion, bastardy, cruelty to children, and so on. During the first five-year period 3.7 per cent of arrests had been for such offenses. In the second period 4.3 per cent of arrests were for offenses against the person, a designation referring largely to case of assault and battery without intent to kill, rape, or rob. During the first five-year period, only 1.5 per cent of arrests had been for this cause. There has occurred a dropping off in arrests for offenses against chastity (adultery, lewd and lascivious cohabitation, fornication, rape, and the like): only 1.8 per cent of arrests were for such offenses during the second period as compared with 6.3 per cent during the first. Arrests for drug addiction have, however, remained stationary—1.2 per cent in the second period as compared with 1.3 per cent in the first. In the second period 2.8 per cent of the arrests were for other offenses, such as arson, escape or rescue, being a fugitive from justice, and the like. During the first five years 1.9 per cent of all the arrests had been for such offenses."<sup>1</sup>

But, "Omitting from consideration those men whose delinquencies were unknown or who lived in the community for so brief a period that their delinquent behavior

<sup>1</sup> P. 62.

could not be fairly estimated, and those who were in institutions on sentences imposed in a previous period, we have, then, a total of 118 of the 368 men (32.1 per cent) who were clearly non-delinquents during the second five-year period, as compared with 89 of the 414 men (21.5 per cent) during the first. This is an appreciable decrease in the proportion of delinquents and criminals during the second five years as compared with the first. That the trend away from criminality is definitely upward is indicated by the fact that by the fifth year of the second period 42.7 per cent of 321 men then involved had become non-delinquent."<sup>2</sup>

Having pointed out the amount and nature of crime committed by these persons, the authors discuss the reasons for the decrease. They examine the relation between delinquency, or non-delinquency, and such factors as family relations, economic responsibility, industrial status and use of leisure time; the resemblances and differences between delinquents and non-delinquents in respect to various possible conduct influencing conditions such as parentage, mobility, church attendance, financial status, punitive experiences, mental characteristics, neighborhood conditions, marital relationships, industrial stability, and apparently anything else they could discover that might be pertinent. The conclusions they draw from this examination and the resultant tabulations are properly hesitant, in apparent recognition of the insufficiency of the data to justify dogmatic statement. One interesting suggestion is that "The factor of *Aging* (maturation) emerges, then, as one of great significance in the reformatory process. No other factor, at least among those included in this research, appears to have any significant influence upon reformation. The sheer passage of time, with the maturation that accompanies it, seems to be the key to an understanding of the reasons for reformation."<sup>3</sup> And again, "*The major conclusion that emerges from this chapter is the fact of a rising trend toward improvement in all aspects of the activities of our men accompanying the passage of time (aging or maturation). This proceeds to approximately the age of 36, beyond which there is retrogression to less favorable conditions.* The decline in incidence of the favorable conditions beyond that age suggests that among our particular group of criminals at any rate, the process of improvement in large measure ceases by the time the age of 36 is reached."<sup>4</sup>

It would, however, be unfair to the authors for the reviewer to repeat their conclusions without the discussion by which they are prefaced, or to set out part of the compiled data separated from its context. The book should be studied as a whole, as the authors evidently intended. And when so studied, it seems to the reviewer to illuminate the problem of crime with unusual absence of that personal heat which so often puts false colors into the light it casts. Perhaps a study of only 500 instances, even though followed through a ten-year period, is insufficient numerically to be accepted as proof of anything. But the product of this particular study, at least when added to other published records, convinces the reviewer of the utter futility of punishment as a means for preventing repetition of crime. What else it tends to show will depend in some measure on the reader's knowledge of additional data. But whatever such reactions may be, the book is obviously the product of admirable skill and effort in the procurement of its data and a valuable addition to what little is known concerning criminals and the effect of various factors on their conduct.

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<sup>2</sup> P. 75.

<sup>3</sup> P. 106.

<sup>4</sup> P. 122.

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