it is evident that it is a part of a boy's life which must be reckoned with and "the problem is to suppress the undesirable activities with as little damage as possible. . . . For there must be a pretty accurate balance between the life of the home and the life of the gang if the boy is to get the best training out of both. The boy must, for the most part, make this social adjustment for himself, and the safest time for doing it is while he is still in the home. Boys who have been kept too close up to the time when they go away to make life for themselves, too often afford most striking lessons in how not to do it. In college and in business, under their unaccustomed liberty, they go all to pieces for lack of the education which they should have had as boys in the gang."

Mr. Puffer considers the "group games," such as tennis, baseball, hockey, swimming, etc., as a necessary part of a boy's training, as they teach quickness of thought and action, courage, loyalty, and at the same time give physical training. The gang is, therefore, a natural and a necessary stage in normal development. Carefully watched and wisely controlled, it is both the most natural and the least expensive instrument that we can employ to help our sons through one of the most critical periods of their lives. Nine-tenths of the gang's activities depend on primitive, instinctive impulses which cannot be suppressed, and which need only to be sanely guided to carry the boy along the path which nature has marked out and bring him out at the end a useful citizen and a good man."

Mr. Puffer and Mr. E. T. Brewster, who so ably edited the book, have not only a deep sympathy with boy nature, but a knowledge of boy psychology, which together make the book a valuable addition to the meagre literature on this subject, especially as it is written in a clear, interesting style and has a flavor of freshness and enthusiasm throughout which holds the reader to the end.

That some of the ideas expressed will be criticized by conservative parents and teachers goes without saying, more especially those on religious and school training. But every advance has been criticized and this book is in line with the most modern thought as to child education.

FLORENCE A. BURLEIGH.

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ON IMPRISONMENT FOR CRIME.

An Open Letter to Society. From Convict 1776. Published by Fleming H. Revell Co., Chicago. 1911. Price, 75 cents net.

The author, who has served time in more than one penitentiary, has drawn from the bitter well of his experience some humane conclusions about punishment and criminals, and speaks for their acceptance by society. Crimes against property are the only sort under consideration.

There can be, he writes, only three motives for punishment: Revenge, repression, reform. Revenge, while not acknowledged as a motive under our laws, is nevertheless the sole explanation for the severity of many sentences and much prison discipline. The cited instances curdle and convince every civilized drop of blood within us.

About punishment for repression the author agrees with the criminologists that the main weakness of our penal law is "the uncertainty with which punishment follows crime"; and he states as the "Law of Repression": "Punishment as a deterrent from crime can be efficacious only when the benefits, real or imagined, which the would-be criminal may expect to reap from his meditated crime, are outweighed by the *least* punishment which you inflict for that crime."

That punishment is not for reform, thinks the author, our penitentiaries as a whole are living proof. Prison life affords association with criminals, hardens in crime, breaks down will-power, causes work to seem slavery instead of the means of salvation it is. The very convicts most able to reform are most hampered, the very methods that make against reform are practiced by prison officials. "Under childish restrictions, strong men are troublesome. Yet the man who is courageous enough to resent unjust punishment is quick to recognize justice and fairness. Of all your convicts, he would make the most desirable citizen, but he is the very one whom prison officials stamp as incorrigible without considering the value of courage and will-power, or the stupidity of the rules under which he frets." The desire to reform, this man has remarked, is usually strongest after only a few weeks in prison, and just then must the man be given work and gradually increasing liberty with guardianship against temptation, if he is to be reformed.

In brief, our laws declare reform to be the motive for imprisonment; but the machinery of the law, from police to prison warden, from warrant to release, seems run for mere repression of crime, and public opinion is shifty, even veering now and then toward revenge. Meantime in our jails and penitentiaries and reform schools, boys grow worse and men despair.

This convict's book, with its introduction by Maud Ballington Booth, seems utterly sincere, and written with admirable self-restraint. A curious—or natural?—accompaniment of its reading is one's observance of the precise fitness of these thoughts on the treatment of criminals, to the "disciplining" of children.

ANGELINE LOESCH GRAVES.

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How many times social problems center about the necessity of rousing man from a state of "obedience" which has led him to be exploited and brutalized!—Maria Montessori.