

Table C sets out the habitual criminals dealt with during the same period as that covered by Table B.

Table C.—Habitual Criminals.

Total number declared habitual criminals	234
Of whom there were—	
Released on recommendation of Board	189
Died in prison	3
Remaining in prison on 31st December, 1918	42
	234
Total number released as above	189
Of whom there were—	
Returned to prison for non-compliance with conditions of release	39
Returned to prison on conviction for further offences	47
Returned to prison for offences committed after their discharge from probation	6
	92
Absconded and not traced	15
Died	5
Left Dominion to return to former domiciles	15
Committed to mental hospital	1
Reporting on probation at 31st December, 1918	44
Number who have not offended, so far as known, since their discharge from probation, and presumably doing well	17
	189

Of those returned to prison 19 returned twice, 3 returned three times, and 1 returned four times.

The contrast between the statistics of the prisoners who have undergone reformatory detention and those who have been declared habitual criminals is marked. The proportion of the latter who have not offended again after release is 52 per cent. It may be pointed out, however, that 15 have absconded and not been traced, 5 have died, 15 have left to return to their former domiciles, 1 has been committed to a mental hospital, and 44 are still under the probation officers. As will be observed from the table above, the total number of those who have committed fresh crimes is 92, so that 47 per cent. have returned to their former criminal careers. If the past records (which are all definitely bad) of these habitual criminals be examined, however, the Board does not think that the result can be termed disappointing, as they almost invariably lack the will-power to abstain from wrong-doing, and so follow the line of least resistance.

Francis Galton in his works on heredity points out that a distinct criminal type is to be found in old civilizations, and that heredity plays an important part in crime. He illustrates this in his book entitled "Enquiries into Human Faculty and its Development," from which the following passage is of sufficient interest to be cited here :—

"The perpetuation of the criminal class by heredity is a question difficult to grapple with on many accounts. Their vagrant habits, their illegitimate unions, and extreme untruthfulness are among the difficulties of the investigation. It is, however, easy to show that the criminal nature tends to be inherited; while, on the other hand, it is impossible that women who spend a large portion of the best years of their life in prison can contribute many children to the population. The true state of the case appears to be that the criminal population receives steady accessions from those who, without having strongly marked criminal natures, do nevertheless belong to a type of humanity that is exceedingly ill-suited to play a respectable part in our modern civilization, though it is well suited to flourish under half-savage conditions, being naturally both healthy and prolific. These persons are apt to go to the bad; their daughters consort with criminals and become the parents of criminals. An extraordinary example of this is afforded by the history of the infamous Jukes family in America, whose pedigree has been made out with extraordinary care, during no less than seven generations, and is the subject of an elaborate memoir printed in the Thirty-first Annual Report of the Prison Association of New York, 1876. It includes no less than 540 individuals of Jukes' blood, of whom a frightful number degraded into criminality, pauperism, and disease."

In the same publication Galton urges that the criminal propensities of public offenders are often inherited from their progenitors. He says—

"We must guard ourselves against looking upon vicious instincts as perversions, inasmuch as they may be strictly in accordance with the healthy nature of the man, and, being transmissible by inheritance, may become the normal characteristics of a healthy race, just as the sheep-dog, the retriever, the pointer, and the bull-dog have their several instincts."

Surely society may reserve the right to control those who show themselves to be unfit for civil life, and hence the right to impose indeterminate sentences? And to ensure its own protection society may have to go even further. If, as seems to have been proved, crime, or the want of power to resist crime, is hereditary, we shall have to take steps to prevent the breeding of the type to which our criminals apparently belong. There are in our prisons to-day many instances of criminals who have descended from criminals, and of different members of the same family who have been