

Orphanage teacher to write first history of reform schools

AFTER two years of research, reading old records and visiting modern reform schools and Borstals, the first history of this country's Juvenile delinquency problem is about to be written at the Jewish Orphanage, Knight's-hill, West Norwood.

The senior house father at the orphanage, Julius Carlebach, has been commissioned to write the history of the country's reform schools by London University.

Mr. Carlebach hopes to publish it within a year, working in his off-duty hours at the orphanage.

"One thing that I have learnt is that the juvenile delinquency problem is nothing new," he told the *South London Press*.

"I have a newspaper which gives a report from the present Home Secretary, saying that the current rise in delinquency is causing grave alarm.

"I have reports which say the same thing as far back as 1850. I should say that a report viewing the problem 'with grave alarm' has been published at least once every 10 years for the last century."

Mr. Carlebach has found that less than 150 years ago children were being hanged for small thefts and as recently as 1860 children were going to prison for up to 10 years for crimes such as stealing a handkerchief.

KIND OF HOME

In many cases, he says, the judges sent the children to prisons for long terms out of pity, not severity.

"The children had no parents, no homes, and looked upon the prison as a sort of home. For many it was the first time they had ever had a roof over their heads."

Mr. Carlebach believes that Captain George Hall, the governor of Parkhurst children's prison, now an ordinary prison, was the father of the reform school.

"In those days a suggestion that boys should be looked after when they were released from prisons was nearly revolutionary, and the man must have had amazing foresight," says Mr. Carlebach.

"He was the first man to bring in the housemaster system of supervision because he felt the youngsters needed friendship as well as a heavy hand.

"He was also a lifelong friend of Sir Joshua Jebb, who worked all his life for a respectable prison system."

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