salutary effect of a formal conviction and verbally-expressed sentence may be discounted by the crippling effect in after-life of a recorded conviction.

The best way to provide the close, personal relationship which is the basis of probation is to select and train suitable probation officers with the greatest care. The work being still ill-paid and the profession largely unrecognized, there is a lack of volunteers. The administration of the probation system differs among nations. In Great Britain the responsibility rests with the local authority, and there is no official recognition of the work of voluntary individuals and religious bodies. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, while probationary supervision is a function of the department of the public prosecutor, the actual work of probation and social rehabilitation is carried out by volunteers and religious bodies, both subject to a considerable measure of state control.

It is generally considered that probationary supervision can best be provided by a large voluntary body with a small nucleus of trained personnel. Whichever method is used, there is little doubt that probation, by permitting the offender to remain a useful member of the community, offers an alternative to imprisonment which is highly desirable in a modern society.

Catherine Swanston


This report covers the origin and work of the committee from the preparatory conference at Unesco House in October, 1947, to the end of 1949.


This supplement to the “Catalogue of Economic and Social Projects 1950” covers the work in progress during 1950 and carried over or approved for initiation in 1951. It reflects the 1951 programme approved on January 1, 1951, and should be used in conjunction with the 1950 Catalogue which remains the basic document.