

Medical Items.

THE DEPARTMENTAL PRISON COMMITTEE ON INEBRIATES.—The report of the Departmental Committee on Prisons, just issued, strongly recommends therapeutic instead of penal treatment for habitually drunken criminals. The committee recognizes that habitual drunkards are not criminals in the ordinary sense, and should stand by themselves in a special category, the physical craving for drink being a disease which requires medical treatment not provided by the present prison system. The committee suggests that persons committed for drunkenness and associated offences should be collected in separate prisons or wards, dealt with as patients rather than criminals, and special medical treatment applied to them. The committee endorses the recommendation of the English committee on inebriates that magistrates be invested with full power to commit habitually drunken offenders for lengthened periods.

THE MONTREAL MEDICAL JOURNAL,

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

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Subscription price, including postage, \$2.00 per annum, in advance. Single copies, 25c.

The volume commences with the July number, but subscriptions may begin at any time.

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