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STRANGE WAY TO REFORM MENTAL DEFICIENT

The extraordinary case of Walt Cierpisz is worth study. This 17-year-old soldier has been convicted in Calgary of killing a fellow soldier. On a manslaughter count he was sentenced to 10 years hard labor.

Walter Cierpisz, said by psychiatrists to have a mental age of 10 and "quite possibly insane at the time of the shooting" was, according to the evidence, a peculiar personality. Soldiers testified at the trial that he had been the victim of teasing, his bed and uniforms trampled, and water thrown at him.

Judge McBride, addressing the accused after the verdict, is reported as having said: "I suggest to you that you are quite mature enough to understand you have received an opportunity from this jury, to become a good citizen. . . . The jury has been merciful to you."

Two questions arise. How was it that a boy of this type was accepted into the army? In what manner can 10 years hard labor in the company of criminals, be an opportunity for a youth with sub-standard mind to become a good citizen?

As a general background to this question of the existing system of penology in Canada, we ought to carefully consider figures presented before the Rotary Club of London by Daniel Coughlin, director of probation in the attorney-general's department at Toronto. Mr. Coughlin stated that in 1952, Britain with a population of 43,000,000, sent 32,000 people to prison. In the same year, Ontario, with about a tenth of Britain's population, jailed 33,000 of its citizens. The number jailed throughout Canada in 1952 was 99,602. He wants more probation, not coddling, but serious efficient probation—which is also reform. It is time we tried it.

EVENTIDE

God loves the aged.
He gives them greater visions than the young;
He puts the words of wisdom on their tongue;
And keeps His presence ever by their side

From dawn to dusk
And on through eventide
God helps the aged
within their home His spirit ever dwells

Their mellow hearts are touched like chiming bells
He calms their fears then worries disappear
Because they know His help is always near.

God keeps the aged
With hearts of gold, and silver tinted hair
And earnestness and greater faith in prayer:
He keeps them as a shepherd guards his sheep
Till in his fold they gently fall asleep.

—Charles Bancroft

PEARL BAILEY

Y CIRCUS STAR

Chicago — A package show, topped by Pearl Bailey, is set to play the Pine Street YMCA branch circus in Kiel Auditorium, St. Louis, for six days beginning April 16.

Proceeds of the show will aid underprivileged children in the scale of the colored YMCA branch.

The show includes Arthur Lee Simpkins, the Three Rockets, Louis Bellson and his Quintet with Don Redman conducting the Bellson orchestra and another as yet unnamed act. The same group is being booked into Chicago's Regal Theatre, May 7, minus Simpkins.

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