

POPULATION OF STATE PRISONS NEARLY DOUBLE

Ratio to Total Number of People in Indiana Shows Skyward Leap.

BY BEN STERN

One hundred twenty and nine-tenths persons of every 100,000 of Indiana's population of 3,124,000 were in the State prison at Michigan City or the Pendleton reformatory in 1927.

This is nearly double the ratio of 1901, when statistics showed 69.5 for every 100,000 in the same institutions.

Statistics of the State Board of Charities today reveal that the increase in prison population is due not only to a greater number of commitments, but also to much longer sentences.

Between Nov. 1, 1900, and Oct. 1, 1927, a total of 22,731 men over 16 years of age and 630 women over 18 years of age—23,361 all together—were committed to the Indiana State prison, the reformatory and the penal department of the woman's prison.

Commitments Doubled

Tabulated statistics show that the number of such commitments has more than doubled in recent years. There was an average of 1,347 annually for the period 1901-1905, inclusive.

Two hundred seventy-one juvenile delinquents were committed to the State schools for boys and girls in 1901 and 341 in 1927.

The highest number in any fiscal year was 455 in 1918.

There has been a marked tendency toward decrease in population of the boys' and girls' schools, a result of juvenile courts, which came into existence in 1903, to be followed by the present system of juvenile probation. This has resulted in better care for neglected children.

Half Born in Indiana

Classification for every 100 men committed to the State prison and the reformatory, during the last twenty-seven years shows an average of eighty-one white men and nineteen colored; fifty born in Indiana, forty-three in other States, and seven in foreign countries.

Of the 22,731 men committed to the State prison and reformatory during the last twenty-seven years, there was an average per hundred of twenty-six under twenty-one years of age, thirty-nine between twenty-one and thirty years; and thirty-five who were thirty years or older.

Tabulations on proportion of each age group show remarkably little change over the twenty-seven-year period.

That disturbed period immediately following the World War made itself felt in a marked increase in youthful offenders in 1919. Five years later the proportion under twenty-one years was back to the general average.

Offenses Tabulated

Practically three-fourths of all commitments to the State penal institutions are because of crimes against property, robbery, burglary, forgery and larceny.

Tabulation of the offenses for which 6,984 commitments were made during a three-year period, 1925-1927, shows: homicide, 4.0; rape, 3.9; assault, 4.4; sex offenses, 1.2; robbery, 6; burglary, 14.5; forgery, 9.5; larceny, 43.7; liquor law violations, 4.9; and miscellaneous, 7 per cent.

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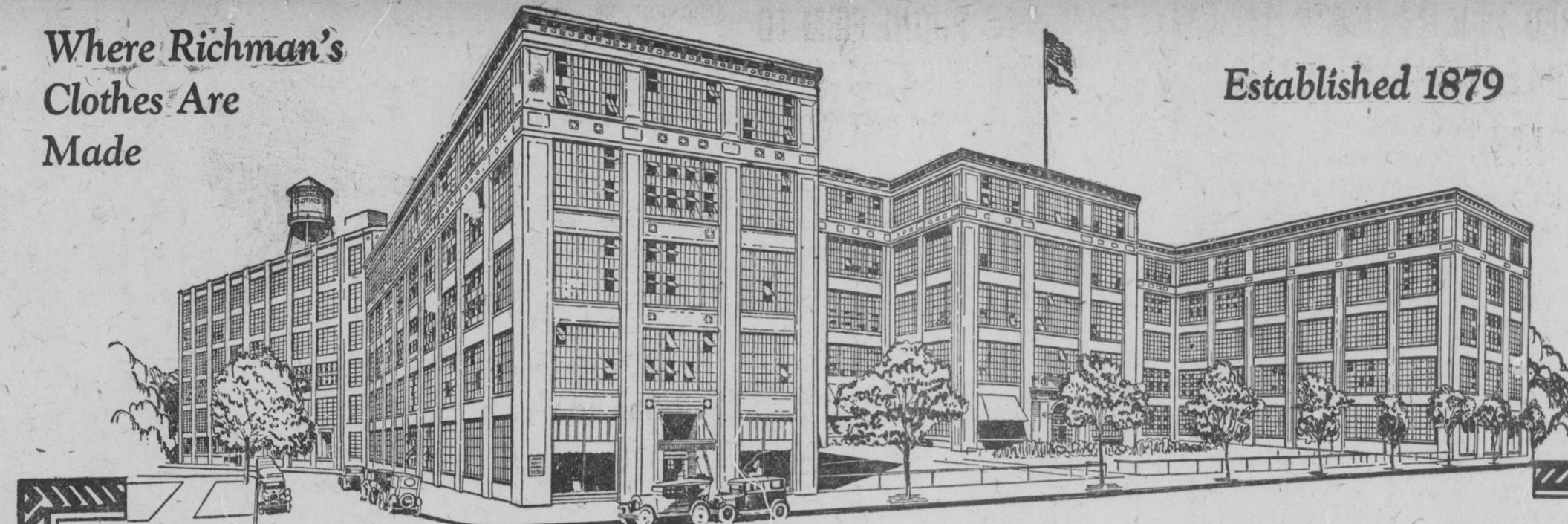
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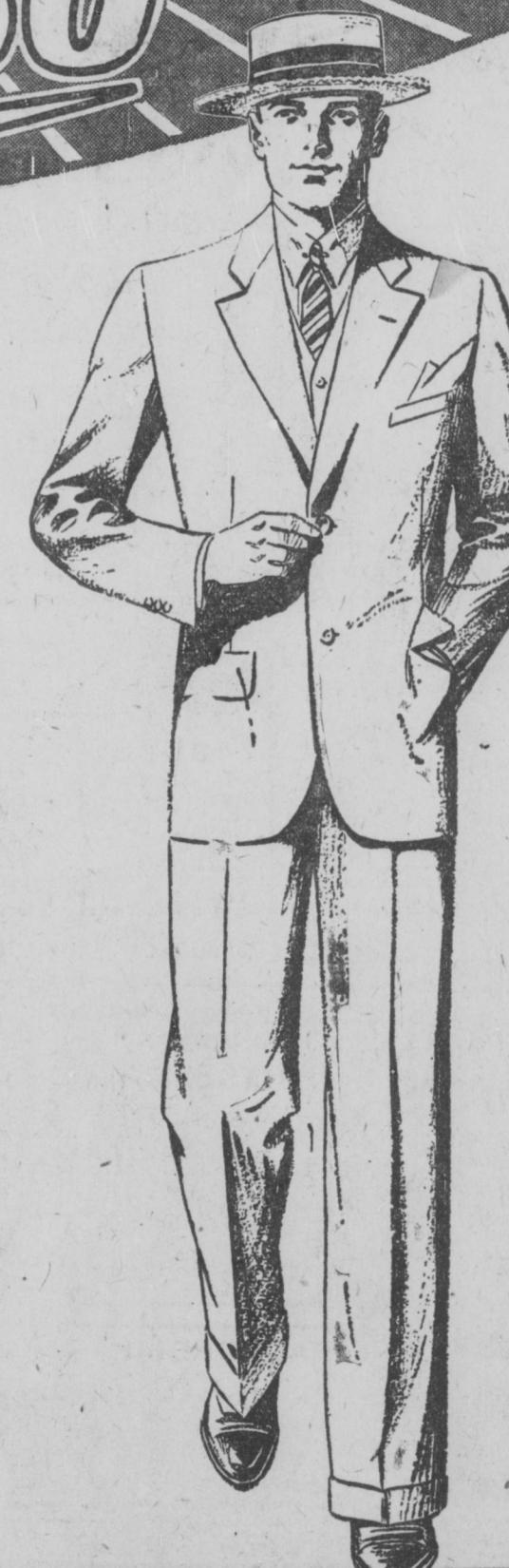


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