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T. C. MORELOCK, *Editor*

THE NEWSPAPER AND CRIME

By

VIRGINIA LEE COLE, B. J., A. M.

ISSUED FOUR TIMES MONTHLY; ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE POSTOFFICE AT COLUMBIA, MISSOURI—2,500

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PREFACE

The history of crime may be traced through the ages without finding any great degree of variation either in extent or in content. Crimes found to be common to one race are also found to be prevalent among other races. Nor do the types of crime differ materially from one generation to another.

The earliest crime to be recorded was that of murder, when Cain through jealously killed his brother, Abel. Not only has this type of crime persisted until the present time, but the motive behind it is deep-rooted in the emotional make-up of individuals in all civilizations.

The Bible, even more than any other book, offers a wealth of material for the study of early crime. In the Ten Commandments are listed those offenses which, in modern society, are a violation either of the moral law or of the statutes of man-made law. There is no one of the commandments that is not supported by public sanction.

EDITORS NOTE: This bulletin was written in April, 1926, as a thesis while Miss Cole was a graduate student at the University of Missouri. It was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

THE NEWSPAPER AND CRIME

INTRODUCTION

The present study has a four-fold purpose. In the first place it is in the nature of a general analysis of the crime news situation, and is an attempt to present the different phases of the subject. This may be said to be its historical purpose. For the most part this material will be presented in Part I, on the theory that it is needed as a background for a comprehensive study of crime news publication in the modern American newspaper.

The second purpose is statistical in nature. Under this head, the writer attempts to organize and present important surveys, experiments and observations which have been made in regard to the treatment of crime news, and to contribute statistics formed from a technical study of certain newspapers, believed to be illustrative of "the press."

In the third place, there will be considered arguments for and against crime publicity. These arguments are representative of public opinion, which deserves consideration in such a study, though it cannot be evaluated by any scientific measurement.

The fourth purpose is to form certain definite conclusions, resulting from investigations, experiments and analyses.

It is necessary, for the purpose of this study, to define the terms newspaper and crime. That the newspaper is a paper which prints news, may be said in all honesty, but what is news? This question has been asked time after time, yet no two persons will agree.

In 1911, Collier's Weekly ran a series of symposiums from managing editors of the largest American newspapers in answer to the question, "What is news?" The following may be given to illustrate the degree to which the ideas differed:

> "News is whatever your readers want it to be."—Kansas City Star (Kansas City, Mo.)
>
> "In the strict technical sense, news comprises all current activities which are of general interest, and the best news, professionally speaking, is that which interests the most readers."—North American (Philadelphia.)
>
> "News is anything people will talk about. The more it will excite their comment the greater its value."—News Leader (Richmond, Va.)
>
> "The newspaper instead of being an arbiter of what is and what is not news, is simply a servant obeying the orders of its master—the readers."—Omaha Daily News (Omaha, Neb.)
>
> "A well-trained newspaper reporter is the only person who is capable of telling, through his sixth sense divination, exactly what news is. And after the reporter's story has been filtered through the city editor, the copy reader, the managing editor, and finally after a sail-trimming business manager gets a whack at it, nobody knows what news is."—Jackson Daily News (Jackson, Miss.)

For the purpose of this thesis it will be sufficient to use the definition of news as given by Charles A. Dana, who said, "By news I mean, everything

that occurs, everything which is of human interest, and which is of sufficient importance to arrest and absorb the attention of the public or any considerable part of it."

In the legal sense, a crime is a violation of the law. This is the simplest definition one may find, and is thoroughly satisfactory in this consideration.

A classification of crimes for statistical purposes includes: crimes against the person, crimes against property, and crimes against public decency, public order and public justice. According to Dr. E. H. Sutherland, most crimes are crimes against public order or public morality, such as disorderly conduct and drunkenness; next to them in frequency come the crimes of dishonesty without violence.

This thesis will not confine itself to crime as set forth in the classification above, but will also discuss scandal, divorce and some of the other so-called "anti-social acts." which are closely related to crime in that their effect upon society tends to break down its institutions.

PART I

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF CRIME PUBLICITY

CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY OF CRIME PUBLICATION

The history of crime publication may be traced back to the time in which Acta Diurna, in manuscript form, gave to the Romans their accounts of current happenings, or "acts of the day," as the name signifies. As there were no printing presses to make copies of these manuscripts, they were written and either passed from one to another or posted in prominent places.

These manuscripts told of political matters and of other occurrences believed to be of interest to the public. In an early copy of these is found an account of the arrest of certain sellers of meat for having given to the consumer impure products.

An example of a sensational case during the first century was that of Claudius I., whose official title was Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus. Claudius, born in 10 B. C., was emperor of Rome from 41 to 54 A. D.

He had two wives, the first being Messalina, of "notorious fame." Allowed to guide her husband's affairs on account of his retiring nature, she practiced cruelties and extortions at her pleasure. Because of her infidelity and treason, she was executed, and Claudius married his niece, Agrippina.

Under her guidance, he deprived his son, Britannicus, of succession to the throne and adopted her son, Nero. When Agrippina thought that Claudius was showing an inclination to deprive Nero from succession, she caused him to be poisoned with a dish of mushrooms.

Broadsides and ballads dealing with such sensational material were popular long before the birth of the modern newspaper. Murders, executions, suicides and scandals were presented in manuscript form to the English public until the time of Queen Elizabeth.

The Elizabethan period was one in which crimes were exploited perhaps more than at any other time in history. Literature was full of horrible deeds of varied nature. Chronicles giving minute details furnished the basis for many domestic tragedies, the popularity of which depended upon their realism. They did not attempt to make any appeal to their audience other than through the accurate portrayal of some gruesome event that had occurred in English life.

Dr. H. Y. Moffett, in his thesis, *Elizabethan Tragedies Based on Contemporary Murders*, made a fascinating study of the literature of that time. He says that these tragedies appealed to the best audiences, and he proves his statement by the fact that *Murderous Michael* and *The Cruelty of a Stepmother* were presented at court in 1578.

Dekkar, Johnson, Ford, Chapman and Webster were among those who wrote such tragedies. The title page of the first edition of the *Arden of Feversham* (published in 1592), the first known specimen of the type mentioned, tells in a few words the horror and villainy found in the domestic tragedy. It is quoted by Dr. Moffett as follows:

> "The Lamentable and True Tragedie of M. Arden of Feversham in Kent. Who was most wickedlye murdered, by the meanes of his most disloyall and wanton wife, who for the love she bare to one

> Mosbie, hyred two desperat ruffins Blackwill and Shakbag to kill him. Wherein is shewed the great mallice and dissimilation of a wicked woman, the insatiable desire of filthie lust, and the shameful end of all murderers."

The closing words of the epilogue are believed by Dr. Moffett to be the theory of the domestic tragedy:

> "Gentlemen, we hope you'll pardon this naked tragedy,
> Wherein no filed points are foisted in
> To make it gracious to the ear or eye;
> For simple truth is gracious enough
> And needs no other points of glozing stuff."

Prof. C. W. Wallace, in speaking of a group of authors among whom were numbered Lodge, Green, Marlowe and Kyd, is quoted by Dr. Moffett as having made the following statement:

> "The great thing for these young dramatic plungers—and they did it well—was to remember the audience, and to give them plenty of thunder, battle, blood, buffoonery, bombast and show—action, action, action, through it all. Though they drew subjects and names of characters from Italy, France, Spain and other countries, the place was after all England, and the characters were intensely English—on the level of what was known or imagined by the audience."

A crime, the gruesomeness of which overshadows most of the other crimes dealt with in literature, is the one forming the theme for *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1605), said to have been written by Shakespeare.

The event giving rise to this play may be described briefly. A man by the name of Walter Calverly of Calverly in Yorkshire murdered two of his children, attempted to stab his wife to death, and to kill his youngest child, but was prevented. According to the early record of the affair, he was tried at Yorke, and was convicted. He was executed at the Castell at Yorke, Aug. 5, 1605.

Similar cases have been found in more recent years, yet since the beginning of the use of the insanity plea, unknown in the time of Calverly, the execution of the offender has been found less frequently.

Another type of murder which so horrified the public during the last few years was that of the oft-spoken-of "hammer" murder. Nor is this idea new. In the *Two Lamentable Tragedies* (1601) this method is used to dispose of one of the characters.

> "And therefore I will place the hammer here,
> And take it as I follow Beech upstaires,
> That suddenly, before he is aware,
> I may with blowes dash out his hateful braines."

The modern "hammer" murder cases seem appalling in their brutality, yet just such an idea was presented in play form to the audiences at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Another circumstance which is also found to have parallel character in the two different ages is that of the wife of M. Arden in *Arden of Feversham*, who, when she thought that Blackwill, Shakebag and Michael, her employes, were not going to make a thorough job of the killing of her husband, rushed in with her dagger and helped finish the task.

This affair was almost duplicated in the Aggie Meyer case that occurred in this state about twenty-two years ago. The wife in the latter instance was

said to have helped her lover in the murder of her husband with a pair of scissors. She was sentenced to life imprisonment, but, although still a comparatively young woman, she was among those pardoned last year. The Arden case, by contrast, was concluded with the execution of the eight guilty persons.

In the Shakespearean tragedies, *Hamlet* (1602), *Othello* (1604), *King Lear* (1605), *Macbeth* (1606), one finds that sinister murder is the central theme. The methods of disposing of the individuals may not have been as easy as they are at the present time owing to the free use of firearms, but the crimes themselves were, for the most part, premeditated and were effectively carried out.

Tragedy has had a prominent and influential place in literature, and the portrayal of crime has been so closely related to it that the two cannot be dissociated. That crime publicity began before the newspaper first appeared should not be overlooked. Nor should one ignore the fact that crime was popularized in early literature and that the audience was not composed of mere "groundlings," as Shakespeare characterized the common people, but that there were also those of the higher class.

Since crime has prevailed throughout the generations, it is obvious that it would be found in the newspaper, considering that the object of the newspaper is to record events or current happenings.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL CHANGES IN THE PRESS

There is doubt about the first newspaper, but it is believed that Ching-Pao, the records of which can be found as far as 413, might have been the first. It is the oldest in continuous service in the world. Its influence does not seem to have spread far, nor can the European newspapers be said to have been derived directly from it.

The first newspaper printed on English soil was first published May 12, 1623, a date which marks the beginning of the English press. It was also at this time that the term *news* began to be used. Since that time the newspaper has developed in many important ways.

Before considering its development, the Newgate Calendar, outstanding in that it is devoted solely to crime news, should be discussed. It was published in connection with the celebrated London prison, Newgate, which was given its name because it was in the portal of the new gate of the city. Newgate was used as a prison as early as 1218, and has been in use practically ever since that time.

The Calendar has the sub-title of "Malefactors' Bloody Register," and it contains authentic accounts of the lives, exploits, trials, executions, dying confessions, and other information relating to the most notorious criminals. The Calendar also published facts concerning other violators of laws in England, Scotland, and Ireland, from the year 1700.

This Newgate Calendar is not a newspaper, but the reason for its having been mentioned here is that certain critics of the modern newspapers have drawn comparisons between those papers and the famous Newgate Calendar.

The American newspaper has gained greater independence within the last few years than at any other time in its development. It is no longer bound down by the dictations of political parties. With the dying out of personal journalism, have come broader visions of service and of duties. Most of the evils once prevalent in advertising have been eliminated, and there has been a trend toward increased fairness and impartiality in the presentation of various types of news and of editorial comment.

That the newspaper has reached perfection could not be said, yet there are certain tendencies toward greater improvement concerning which those in the newspaper field have reason to be proud. During its development, like all new projects, it made its mistakes, but the majority of them have been outgrown.

John Gilmer Speed, in an article in the Forum, says that in 1812 Dr. Benjamin Rush bequeathed his books with an endowment to the Philadelphia Library upon the condition that no part of the fund should be used for purchasing newspapers. His belief as stated by Mr. Speed, was that newspapers were "teachers of disjointed thinking."

This is an example of the attitude many persons had toward the early press, for, at the beginning, newspapers were looked upon with contempt, and the earliest journalists were ridiculed as sorcerers and devils.

The growth of journalism was irregular from having encountered so many difficulties. Miss Jessie Helen Sims, in her thesis on the *History of*

American Journalism, picturesquely summarizes its progress in the following manner:

> "Like a small stream winding itself over rock and crevice, journalism had to be fed by many water-courses before it became navigable—yet the day is here when it sweeps along majestically and powerfully. Journalism has become the conserver of all that has come and gone before us, and it assures us that the past through which civilization has struggled will continue to be known to us and those to come, so that we may act in the present by the past experience and judge our future. It has played the part of the modern spiritualist by bringing the invisible spirits of the past in communion with us."

This may be supplemented by a figurative description given by H. A. O'Donnell of the Philadelphia Press, in an address before the National Catholic Educational Association. "The newspapers," he said, "publish the motion pictures of life's yesterday and today and portray the drama of which all others are but copies, art but imitation, religion the warning, society and politics the plot—earnest, intense, acting—with human success the object and obituaries the end."

Since Dr. Rush's death, and since the introduction of the cheap-priced newspapers, the reader has been able to get his information from a number of sources. This has, without doubt, been a stimulus for individual thinking.

In direct contrast to Dr. Rush's bequest, Mr. Speed tells of William C. Todd of Atkinson, N. H., who, in 1893, gave $50,000 to the Boston Public Library with the directions that the income from this fund be spent for buying newspapers that should be kept in an accessible place in the building, where all citizens and strangers might "enter freely and read."

Prior to this time, Mr. Todd had given $10,000 to another library for a similar purpose. It was his belief that newspapers rather than books should be provided for people to read, for many of the latter remained on the library shelves with uncut leaves for generations.

This attitude shows that the press, after having long been looked upon with disfavor, was beginning to be recognized as having some importance and as offering reading material worthy of space on the public reading shelves.

While it is not pertinent to this thesis to consider in detail the historical development of the press, one fact in its development is of value, and that is the introduction of the cheap-priced newspaper. This enlarged the reading public to include all types of persons, and it introduced new difficulties.

When the New York Times went from the 3 cent to the 1 cent class in price, changes were noted in other newspapers, for many of these thought that in order to have a large circulation they would have to adopt scare-heads, and the policy of publishing many pictures. This idea was one of the big forces back of the yellow journalism movement.

About this time the New York World was carrying a series of cartoons of an urchin whom they termed the "Yellow Kid." Associating this idea with that of the Yellow Book, a London periodical devoted to questionable literature, the term "yellow journalism" began to be used.

A fundamental principle lying back of the "yellow" publication was also found in the domestic tragedy, and was aptly expressed by Prof. Wallace. ". . . Plenty of thunder, battle, blood, buffoonery, bombast, and show—action, action, action, through it all." The taste of many readers of today is

not unlike that of Marlowe and Kyd's time, and some newspapers have adopted this means of reaching them.

In a philosophical study of moral ideals one finds that persons and institutions constantly refer to moral standards and that all moral standards reduce themselves to some form of an ideal self. Moreover, that the sort of ideal selves possible depends upon the emphasis on aspects of the self as it is.

The four aspects which may be emphasized are found to be expressed in: (1) ideation; (2) feeling: (3) volition; and (4) equal emphasis upon ideation, feeling and volition. The newspaper audience includes persons who emphasize each of these different aspects. If they were all of the fourth type, the problem of the newspaper as well as that of all other institutions would be less difficult.

The ideal selves under these respective groups are: (1) the philosopher, stressing reason; the scholar, reproductive imagination; the artist, creative imagination; (2) the hedonist, emphasizing pleasant feelings, the ascetic, unpleasant feelings; the esthete, esthetic feelings; (3) the mighty, emphasizing potential will; the strenuous, the kinetic will; and (4) the neutral self, with all aspects emphasized equally.

One also finds that these ideals[1] cannot be separated and developed exclusively, and that the question regarding them is one of emphasis. National ideals reduce themselves to these ideals of persons for the sake of which institutions exist. Ideation primary has to do with the mental life; feeling primary, the emotional life; and volition primary, the will to do.

The persons who emphasize the feeling, primarily, are the only ones who will be considered more carefully here. The hedonists, or pleasure-seekers, subordinate reasoning and will to their feelings. Their newspaper reading is purely for pleasure. If the newspaper presents ideas that correlate with their ideas, they like it, and say that the newspaper is right. Otherwise the newspaper is wrong.

The ascetic may be said to be one who enjoys being miserable. This type loves martyrdom and gets pleasure out of the morbid both in every-day life and in his reading. The esthete stresses the esthetic feelings, while the sensationalist, who dotes on thrills as such, is also the thrill-seeker.

It is to the type of persons who emphasize the feelings that Prof. Wallace's statement is particularly applicable. One can see at a glance that since the public is composed of these different types of ideal selves that the newspaper problem is complex, for the newspaper is only one of the institutions existing for the sake of these persons.

One has only to go to a moving picture theater in which an exciting serial is being shown to find that the thrill-seeker, the one who delights in gun-play and "action," is in our midst and occupies a surprisingly large place. He not only wants his picture shows of that nature, but he would like to have his news served to him the same way.

Frank R. Kent, Washington correspondent of the Baltimore Sun for many years, makes the following pessimistic statement regarding the American public:

> "The feelings and thoughts, when they have any, of the American people are never hidden. There are no 'concealed conditions' here, no dark secrets to be dug up. America is as open as the well-

1. The classification of moral ideals is the one given by Dr. J. W. Hudson in his class, *American Ideals*.

known goose. There is nothing subtle about our civilization. In these standardized, syndicated days, the same influences play on all the people. The same social customs and business methods absorb them, they are afflicted with the same gross misconceptions and misunderstandings.

"You find in one section exactly what you find in another. From coast to coast, the radio, the movies, golf, bobbed hair, business, short skirts, trashy literature, automobiles, lip sticks, bad newspapers, rotten liquor, absorption in money making, almost complete political inertia, and unparalleled muddy-mindedness about public matters—that's the country today."

One cannot deny that there is some foundation for such statements, yet they should be qualified, for there are other influences which in part offset these. "The public" is an elastic term which should be stretched to include all types of persons. It would be as unfair to judge the characteristics of all of these persons by the characteristics of some, as it is to single out some newspapers, the standards of which are low, and call them "the press."

CHAPTER III

NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF THE MODERN PRESS

John A. Macy in an article in The Bookman writes of "Our Chromatic Journalism." It is of four colors, he says,—the yellow, the blue, the black and the white. The yellow includes the bad newspapers; the blue is the despondent pessimistic kind "sicklied o'er with the censorious hue of chronic disapproval;" the black, "the ignorant sort, common in small towns and still to be found in the large cities flourishing side by side with the alert power of most metropolitan news establishments;" and the white, "the pure and honest kind, neither corrupt in administration nor of ill-temper, nor conducted by ignorant mediocrity."

He might well have added another color—red, for the sensational press. This would be an appropriate color since it is loud, bright and can readily attract attention and may be differentiated from the yellow, which Prof. Merle Thorpe, formerly of the University of Kansas, describes in *The Coming Newspaper* as a "rank offshot of sensational journalism."

He further discusses the yellow by saying that "its worthy purpose is questionable. Its handling of crime does not deter, but suggests. Its screams, attracts a crowd and has nothing constructive to offer. Its account of folly in high life is not a ridicule but a pander. It appeals to hate only for hate's sake. It attempts to fool us by an occasional stumbling into righteousness. We applaud when it gives the people cheap gas. It delights to unearth scandal, but its methods do not show it to be concerned in preventing a repetition of that scandal. The malicious coloring, faking, cruel and pitiless publicity, all are stock in trade of the yellows."

Of the sensational press, he says the following:

> "The sensational press turns a somersault if necessary to get attention, and then by mechanical devices and rhetorical appliances strives not only to convince its readers that certain conditions are wrong, but to urge them to set about—and at once—to right them.
>
> "The successful evangelist is a good example of the sensational journalist. He advertises himself; he exaggerates, but in the name of rhetorical hyperbole; he appeals to the emotions; he uses the language of the street; he overemphasizes, he underestimates, he caters to the public, he is spectacular, unusual; he relates sensational tales of vice and the sporting world; he flays the church; and for all this he is not averse to princely profits. The 10 per cent of us attack his motives and hold up our hands in holy horror; the 90 per cent hear, gather, listen, and are, perhaps, moved to live better lives."

Since journalism is of such a chromatic nature it may easily be seen that the terms "the newspaper" and "the press" cannot be used in a limited sense, but must embrace newspapers of each of these different types, whose policies and makeup differ as widely as do their colors.

A misconception of the press will prevail as long as the terms are used loosely to apply to any one of the types, or so long as the press as a whole is measured by one of its parts, or by one of these types. The white variety of newspaper is the ideal, yet such an ideal is hard to attain in a society that in itself is imperfect.

Mr. Thorpe says that "with a clear eye to distinguish the sensational from the yellow press, we perceive that the evils of yellow journalism are passing. It is finding itself, and falling back on old moralities in learning that the long-run policy wins. There is less faking today than ten years ago; there is less salacious, criminal and divorce court news; there is less clubbing, there is less of unworthy purpose."

The black and the blue may still be found to some extent, yet their shades seem to be growing lighter, and perhaps in time they will bleach to a shade nearer white.

That the press is a tremendous power is an accepted fact. Prof. Walter J. Shephard of the University of Wisconsin, writing for the American Journal of Sociology, said:

> "News is the raw material out of which public opinion is made. . . . News enables the newspaper reader to watch the progress of any series of events with the utmost activity. Like spectators at the theater, they await the development of the plot with the keenest interest. The love of a good story or play is one of the deepest-seated passions of the human heart, and this is successfully appealed to by the newspaper."

The newspaper exerts a great influence over public opinion, and, on the other hand, the newspaper depends upon public opinion for whatever power or influence it possesses. In Mr. Thorpe's book, *The Coming Newspaper*, he presents a symposium in answer to the question: "Is it the defense of the newspaper that it must give the public what it wants?"

This is a question which has been asked many times and by many other persons, and the answers given have varied widely. The question, however, is an important one, for one hears on all sides the statement that the newspaper is a public organ and it must necessarily give the public what it wants.

It will be sufficient to quote briefly from four of the answers, which show the opinion of newspaper men in regard to this question:

> "No. It is no better defense than it would be for the selling of whisky, cocaine and opium, for the marketing of stale fish and decayed vegetables, for the publishing of obscene literature and obsene art, for putting on the stage licentious drama, for houses of prostitution and gambling hells, for the manufacturing of dynamite bombs for anarchists. In all these cases the seller gives to the people who buy what the people who buy want. The editor is, or ought to be, a public teacher, and he ought always to give to the public the facts of life as honestly and as accurately as he can do it with the means at his disposal"—Lyman Abbott, Outlook
>
> "The newspaper owner or editor is justified in responding to the demand of the public in so far as that demand does not ask him to do anything against his own conscience. He cannot, however, justify himself for doing anything that seems to him evil, on the ground that a certain individual will be willing to bribe him to do it."—Norman Hapgood, Harpers.
>
> "Of course, we must appeal to the public. A paper cannot be published, manifestly, without the support of the public; but the answer to this question depends on: what is the public and what does the public want? . . . We might divide the public into three parts: the first, the so-called thinking classes and intellectual classes—

'high brows,' if you will; second, the mass of the people, 'low brows' as they are sometimes called; third, the depraved and debased and criminal classes. . . .

"It pays better to stand up for the wholesome things; there are more people interested in them than in the unwholesome things. . . . He (the editor) ought to be compelled, I think, to print nothing absolutely vicious; but beyond that he cannot be compelled to go very much further unless except by the force of public opinion or custom."—Hamilton Holt, Independent.

"Every day in the year, the man who reads a newspaper takes part in a referendum as to the kind of journalism that he wants. He lays down his 3 or 2 cents on the stand and he votes for that kind of journalism. If there really is a high taste in newspapers; if, say, those ten thousands of college graduates who are going forth year after year from our universities want the high-grade journalism, they must support the men who are going to give it and vote for it, or there will eventually be a lowering of the standards of journalism in this country. . . .

"I think we should combat the public low taste by presenting our news fully and accurately; and then demand the right kind of journalism. There must be action between us and the public itself. They must help us create a public opinion in favor of good taste, and we must indicate in what way it can help us."—Oswald Garrison Villard, New York Evening Post.

Walter Lippman, writing for The Century, says:

"At its best the press is a servant and guardian of institutions; at its worst it is a means by which a few exploit social disorganization to their own ends. . . . The trouble lies deeper than the press, and so does the remedy. It lies in social organization based on a system of analysis and record, and in all the corollaries of the principle; in the abandoment of the theory of the omni-competent citizen, in the decentralization of decision, in the co-ordination of decision by comparable record and analysis."

Before passing to a consideration of the European press, it would be well to mention some of the faults attributed to the American press. The following are illustrative of the answers to a questionnaire which Charles V. Stansell of Ottawa, Kan., sent to twenty-five college presidents, asking that each list what be believed to be the three chief faults of the newspaper:

"First, the space, prominence and detail with which newspapers present accounts of crime, family difficulties, suits for divorce, and kindred matters connected with the lower qualities of human nature and appealing to instincts which should be regulated and held in check rather than stimulated. Under this head might be included the minute and sometimes coarse descriptions of boxing matches and similar exhibitions.

"Second, the violation of the sacredness of personal and of family life by bringing to the public, incidents and peculiarities that can serve no good purpose but that cultivate in newspaper readers an impertinence and often a morbid curiosity in regard to persons and experiences in which the public can have no worthy interest.

"Third, the space given to unimportant things, such as the dress and bearings of persons taking part in social functions."—George C. Chase, Bates College, Me.

"The first censurable feature in American newspaper, which I should like to mention, is the feeling apparently held by the newspapers that each of them must take a stand on some current questions. I think it would be better if they avoided a position, particularly on political questions. They would be less likely to be tempted into 'coloring' the news.

"The second bad fault lies in the desire of every paper to make 'a story' out of the plain occurrence of fact. We do not want the news written up; we want the news. Many newspapers chop up the good materials which are given them and then hang them up decoratively on a presentative slab. We want more complete and unadulterated documents.

"Again, it is a vicious habit of many newspapers to lead you down to the bottom of a column on the first page and then suddenly announce that the narrative is continued on page four, column seven. This is only one of a number of false principles now being applied to the formal make-up of newspapers. I wish newspapers would spare us the horror of illustration and colored ink."—Benjamin I. Wheeler, University of California.

Oswald Garrison Villard in The Nation lists the following as "glaring" faults: (1) The persistent refusal to right a wrong done editorially; (2) the suppression of news for profit, or because of fear of some powerful interest; (3) the laying of false emphasis upon news because of criminal or unworthy motives; (4) an amazing and often criminal lack of accuracy in reporting; (5) indefensible attacks upon public men coupled with shocking invasion of privacy of men and women in both public and private life; (6) deliberate falsification of news and facts.

The charges most frequently made against the newspaper are that of manufacturing news, suppressing news, coloring news and inaccuracy in presenting news.

On the other hand, one finds the comment made by a Swiss in regard to the American press, that, with the exception of the Hearst publications, the condition of the American press is, taking everything into consideration, encouraging. During periods like the present, he says, "thinking for its own sake is a luxury. . . . The efforts of the daily papers, which reach the public problems of the day are a source for congratulation."

The progress of journalism in Europe was more greatly affected by the World War than it was in America. And, although the press is beginning to get back to postwar conditions, these effects are still evident. The war not only had a direct influence upon journalism in certain parts of Europe, but it also had an indirect one upon the European press as a whole, through the handicap of bad economic conditions.

Besides not being able to pay for news facilities, the railway service, and the postal and telegraphic facilities were crippled to such an extent that many of the splendidly developed news services were forced to be discontinued. In 1922, an article appeared in the Living Age on "News Barriers in Europe."

The author said that in Vienna, which used to be the news center of Austria, Hungary, the Balkans and the Near East, and which had correspondents in every important center in this territory, such services had to be discontinued.

The condition in Vienna was compared with that in Berlin, where dailies had to rely mainly on local journalists whose messages were written with an eye to securing the approval of the officials where they lived. In Vienna, Bavaria and Amsterdam, methods of punishment for those arousing the displeasure of the officials, remind one of the difficulties encountered by the journalists of earlier periods in their struggle for freedom of the press.

During the last three years changes have taken place in that section of the country, yet the conditions are still unfavorable for freedom as it is understood and practiced in American journalism. The countries having depreciated currencies were the ones where changes were most pronounced, for, as a result the circulation of news was left to semiofficial, state-subsidized agencies. These are purely political organs, and are detrimental to international good will.

French journalism may be summarized in the following paragraph quoted from an article in the Review of Reviews:

> "The French ideal of a daily paper, it seems, is one of about eight small pages, its formost and chief feature being a political leading article usually editorial, the more polemic, satirical, sensational the better. Its authorship should be unmistakable and notable. To this main feature all the rest of the issue should be duly, proportioned and subordinated. Even the most striking events in France or the Outland are not to be reported independently, as 'stories' readable and absorbing in themselves, but recorded merely so far as they illustrate and enforce this contention or argument of the hour, which, again, handles always and primarily a French or even a Parisian problem."

The newspapers and periodicals of France are for two distinct classes. Débats and Le Temps represent those published for the educated classes, while Le Matin and Le Petit Journal are examples of publications for the masses. The purpose of the former type is to instruct, while that of the latter is to guide and amuse.

English journalism is more closely related to our own than is that of any other European country. The chief difference between the two is that the English newspapers stress foreign news, while the American newspapers, with perhaps one exception, devote only a small amount of space to foreign, compared to local news—news of this country[2].

An explanation for this is obvious, when one considers the geographical location and the industrial conditions of the two countries. England, mainly a manufacturing country, naturally would have interests more interwoven with other countries than would America, which is situated far from the others, and has more industrial independence.

Foreign news is being given more space than formerly because of inventions which are bringing all countries more closely together, and yearly uniting their interests. It is to be expected that foreign news will occupy still more space as time progresses.

An article in the Literary Digest on "How our Newspapers Look to England" not only gives American journalism an idea of how outsiders regard

2. The Christian Science Monitor is an exception.

it, but also indirectly throws light on the situation in English journalism. The article was written from the observations of a British writer in the New Statesman (London), who expressed the idea that our newspaper situation is "more hopeful" than the English because of: (1) the rapid growth of schools of journalism which shows that in America increasing thought and practical effort are being devoted to the consideration of the press as a liberal profession and a public service; (2) an energetic movement toward the establishment of independent news service, especially in the economic field; (3) the wide and varied opportunities that America provides for the special correspondent and commentator on affairs, even if his opinions are unpopular; and (4) that, in the United States, it is the rarest thing for a well-known descriptive writer or publicist to be unemployed.

One finds the English newspaper to have substantially the same appearance as the American newspaper, and its faults appear to some extent to correspond to those attributed to the American press. For instance, critics of the two say that the English newspapers give more detail to divorce cases than do the American newspapers.

A scathing criticism in The Spectator of July 25, 1925, shows that the English seem to be no more satisfied with their press than do some of the American critics with theirs. The specific cause for the Spectator editorial was the publicity given the Russell divorce case.

The Spectator said.

> "Almost every element of piquancy and of human interest have combined to make them (referring to the Russell and a 'Mr. A.' and a Col. Dennistoun cases) stories of unparalled news value. . . . In each case well-known people have been involved and in each the most curious and intimate details of sex life have been revealed to the gaping public. . . . Eastern potentates in Paris hotel bedrooms have been picked out in heavy leaded types."

July 16, Lord Darling introduced into the House of Lords a bill designed to curtail the freedom of the newspaper in respect to reporting divorce cases. Under the bill, the newspapers would be allowed to give only the bare facts of the case, with the addition of the judge's summary.

In commenting on the bill, The Spectator says:

> "We are inclined to doubt whether any legislative action is possible—or advisable—on the general issue of 'indecency' in the press reports of all kinds. The dangers of falling into the abuses and absurdities of American 'purity' legislation are far too grave. Few men are fit to judge what the rest of the community shall or shall not read. If certain sections of our society are rotten, it is surely no remedy for us to 'hush the matter up.'
>
> "In general we believe that the light of publicity is always preferable to the darkness of suppression—even when it illuminates squalid nooks and corners.
>
> "As for the question of devoting a greater proportion of the space of the newspaper to constructive activities of man and less to his horrid little meannesses—for that we must wait till a better educated public and a more public spirited press can between them provide it, without need of legislature."

While the newspapers of the two countries may be compared, their crime and other antisocial conditions are greatly contrasted. Whether there is any direct connection between newspaper presentation and crime has been the subject for much theorizing and discussion. Many newspaper and magazine articles have been written on the theme. Most writers, however, have made an attempt to settle the problem by presenting argument to substantiate their beliefs, entirely excluding opposing views.

PART II

STUDY OF CRIME AND CRIME PUBLICATION IN DAILY NEWSPAPERS

CHAPTER I

SURVEYS, EXPERIMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

The question of the degree to which crime news is found in the modern newspaper has been studied by different persons and groups, and the results of many of these are worthy of consideration. Several of the outstanding investigations will be discussed in this chapter.

One of the earliest is that undertaken, in 1893, by John Gilmer Speed who made an attempt to find an answer to the question, "Do newspapers now give the news?" He measured the columns of reading matter in four New York papers—the Tribune, Times, World and Sun. The dates of newspapers studied were, April 17, 1881, and April 16, 1893.

He classified the news under the following heads: "Editorials, religious, scientific, political, literary, gossip, scandals, sporting, fiction, historical, music and drama, crimes and criminals, and art criticism."

The Times in 1881 was found to have 16 per cent of its space devoted to literary matter, while the copy for April 16, 1893, had 9.6 per cent. Gossip in the former copy had .4 per cent, and, in the latter, 11.7 per cent.

There were no scandals in the Sun, Tribune and World for 1881, and only one column in the Times. In 1893, the World and Tribune each had one and a half columns, the Times two and a half and the Sun two.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speed does not express the amount of space given to crime in terms of inches or in per cents. According to his chart, there seems to have been no crime in the papers in 1881, but in the copies in 1893, the Tribune had a half column; the World, six columns; the Times, one column; and the Sun, no news of crime.

He says that although there was a steady "deterioration" in the New York papers, the Chicago newspapers "improved in the other direction." These statistics are not necessarily proof of the actual conditions of the news paper, yet they illustrate the situation in the New York papers of that time. It is difficult to determine the amount of space given to any of these classifications of news on the basis of what occurs on a certain day, because of the fluctuation of current happenings.

Also, one cannot consider four newspapers from the same locality as representative of the truth in "the newspaper." Editorials are the only types mentioned that practically always are confined to a definite page, and, in spite of the variation of occurrences in the day, occupy about the same number of column inches, unless there is some definite change in the general make-up.

In regard to the other classifications, much depends on the editorial policy and the events of the day. For instance, a new invention may be made. To the editor of paper A, this may seem to be of high news value, and worthy of the first page with, perhaps, a column of space. The editor of paper B may not be so impressed by the worth of this story and may give it a half-column on page two. The editor of paper C may relegate this same story to page

eight, with only a few lines. For days there may be no invention considered even of sufficient importance for page eight of any one of these same newspapers.

A more definite illustration of the variability of news is that of the debut of Marion Talley in February. Missouri newspapers had more space devoted to dramatic news than ever before.

Another example is the Jack Daniels whisky scandal, which occupied so much space in the St. Louis papers, while the Kansas City papers, in comparison, said little. The amount of space devoted to any occurrence is either increased or decreased with its proximity, because of local interest. Although major crimes occur daily in the United States, they are not handled alike in any two papers.

[5]"A Study of a New York Daily," made in 1910, by Bryan C. Mathews is somewhat unusual in nature. Mr. Mathews classified 10,029 "items" found during his study, in the following groups:

(1)	Demoralizing	2,289 Items
(2)	Unwholesome	1,684 Items
(3)	Trivial	2,124 Items
(4)	Worth while	3,932 Items
	Total	10,029 Items

In terms of per cent, he put 22.8 per cent of the "items" in the demoralizing class; 16.8 in the unwholesome; 21.2 in the trivial; and 39.2 in the worth while.

Mr. Mathews explained what he meant by each of these terms. By trivial, he referred to "the light, inconsequential matter such as is a loss of time for one to read if he has anything to do that is worth while. It may not be harmful *per se*, it may not have enough meaning to have real influence, yet it may serve the purpose of entertainment for idle people of small brain caliber whose only function in life is existence."

Demoralizing items "when read will leave one's character not quite as clean as it was before reading." He used unwholesome in the sense of "throwing out of order, or putting into disorder, as we say a holiday demoralizes the work of a school."

Mr. Mathews explanation for the worth while is that it includes the "clean news freed from scandals, murder trials, suicides, divorce proceedings and all other news for the publication of which there is never any excuse."

These definitions are general. Had the author of them given a dozen or so illustrations to show what he considered "the light, inconsequential matter," and the "items of unclean influence" his meaning would have been clearer. His explanation of the worth-while news, "the clean wholesome news," tells what it does not, rather than what it does include. His classification is based wholly upon his own personal opinion.

For the study, Mr. Mathews took the daily issues of "one of our best New York dailies," during a period of three months. There was a total of 13,330 items from which he deducted 10,029 for the classification given above. A second part of his study was for the purpose of determining the character of news. He classified all of the 13,330 items under headings which would indicate their character, such as art, accident, blackmail, benevolence, catastrophe, club life and social functions.

Mr. Mathews' study was too subjective and indefinite to be of much value. The item basis of measurement does not give an accurate indication of the relative spaces devoted to different subjects.

"The Scientific Analysis of the Press," made by Alvan A. Tenney, assistant professor of sociology in Columbia University, was an attempt to discover what the newspaper contains.

Dr. Tenney says:

> "The advertiser knows from careful bookkeeping when, where and how advertising pays. By analysis of his results he learns both the best method and the exact cost of producing certain definite changes in the public mind. He thus obtains accurate knowledge of how to make people think what he wants them to think. . . . Why should not society study its own methods of producing its various varieties of thinking by establishing an equally careful system of bookkeeping?"

As a first step in the investigation of this problem, he suggested obtaining data concerning the degree of attention paid by the press to the various topics it notices. He recommends a continuous analysis of the press of the entire country, or even of material sent out by the chief news-supplying agencies each day. He grants, however, that such an analysis would require the continuous services of paid investigators.

The study which he presents is the result of an experiment made by certain students of sociology in Columbia University. These students first measured the number of linear column inches of space devoted on the average by various newspapers to each of the classes of articles published. The study included seventeen New York daily newspapers.

Of these, five were published in English, three in German, five in Italian and four in Yiddish. With the exception of a slight study of advertising in one Italian paper, attention was directed exclusively to the news—defined as including everything printed except editorials, illustrations and advertising.

There were thirteen issues of each of the English papers examined; six of the German; six Italian and seven Yiddish. The total news space measured was for papers in English 98,497 inches, German 13,099, Italian 14,218 and Yiddish 33,768. The column inches devoted to each class of news was reduced to per cents.

There are certain outstanding facts from this study: (1) The dailies printed in English ranked high in political and economic news, low in cultural, high in amusements, low in crime and below the average in personal and social news; (2) the Yiddish newspapers were highest in cultural news; and (3) the Italian far exceeded the others in printing crime news.

Dr. Tenney said that the five papers printed in English were less alike then were the representatives of any other class. For these five newspapers, the variation from the highest to the lowest was for: political news, from 33 to 16 per cent; economic, 32 to 16; cultural, 23 to 12; amusements 26 to 8; accidents and crime 16 to 4; personal, 14 to 7.

The category, "crime and accidents," revealed the most curious facts of the whole investigation. The Italian dailies with their 38 per cent had, for accidents, only one unit. Of the 37, not more than six units dealt with a prominent trial, the others being of typical crimes. The 37 per cent of crime news was subdivided into: trials 16, arrests 4, fights and brawls 3½, bomb and black hand 3½, murder and suicide 3, other crimes 7.

Thirteen issues of a standard daily printed in Italy about the same dates, showed only 8 per cent crime news. No theory was advanced regarding the cause of this.

The study is important in that it portrays certain racial characteristics. For instance, one finds the Yiddish high in culture on account of their deep interest in education and drama; the German high in culture because of their love for music and the Italians high in culture because of their enthusiasm for art. The Italian newspapers were high in crime in a large measure because of the bad social conditions in the slums and in the "Little Italy" districts.

In like manner, the study shows certain outstanding characteristics of the American people. We were high in political news, and still higher in economic news, which exemplifies the "money-mad" tendencies attributed to Americans. Our dailies were high in amusements and low in culture, which is also of significance.

One of the most comprehensive studies was that made by Thomas R. Garth of the State Normal School, Farmville, Va. Mr. Garth's experiment was for the purpose of demonstrating to his classes in principles of education that "there are such things as social interests and that they are real things." It was an endeavor to show society's physic processes as evidenced by behavior.

Mr. Garth said that it was impossible to bring soicety itself into the classroom, but it was possible to study evidences of its behavior in a concrete form, through the examination of the newspaper, as an index to social interests.

This study was broader than most studies, and more representative of "the press." The conditions observed for the research were four in number. 1. It would be better to select issues of the same daily paper so that continuity of interest might be insured. 2. There should be more than one publication from which these series of issues would be taken. 3. The time element should be as wide-spread as possible as so to make the measurement representative of these present days and to make the stimuli fair samples of what goes on in the civilized world. 4. There should be miscellaneous papers to act as checks on these especially selected ones.

The 138 newspapers measured included 55 issues of the Richmond Times-Dispatch (Richmond, Va.); 56 issues of the New York Times; and 27 other papers selected at random from Baltimore, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Washington, Lynchburg and Pittsburgh.

These newspapers were given to students, who were studying current events, with the following instructions:

> "1. Find out how many column inches are devoted to these topics: war, sport, education, government, society, politics, business, religion, crime, noted persons, deaths and births, industry, marriage, public safety and accidents, benevolence, finance, agriculture, weather, literature, household arts, improvements, jokes, science and discovery, the exposition, persons not noted, amusements and recreation, transportation and art.
>
> "2. Measure the column inches of solid reading matter, ignoring headlines, using an ordinary foot rule.
>
> "3. Place the amount of column inches found for each topic in its respective place—war under war, sports under sports and sum these up.

"4. Measure nothing but solid reading matter. Ignore advertisements, funny pictures and cartoons—ignore anything besides reading matter. This includes editorials, announcements of deaths and births, stock markets."

Each of the newspapers was studied separately. After this was done, Prof. Garth made a chart showing the relative strength of the interests as operating in society, on the basis of the material found in the newspapers. The following figures show what he found to be the average per cent of column inch space for the various types of news:

1.	War	14.00	17.	Agriculture	1.70
2.	Sports	10.14	18.	Theater	1.50
3.	Government	10.00	19.	Marriage	1.30
4.	Business	7.70	20.	Benevolence	1.21
5.	Finance	6.22	21.	Improvements	1.20
6.	Crime	6.14	22.	Weather	1.10
7.	Politics	5.70	23.	Jokes	.90
8.	Education	3.61	24.	Household arts	.90
9.	Deaths and births	3.60	25.	Science and discovery	.80
10.	Society	3.60	26.	Fashion	.70
11.	Safety and accidents	2.80	27.	Amusements	.60
12.	Noted persons	2.70	28.	Exposition	.60
13.	Industries	2.22	29.	Divorce	.40
14.	Religion	2.00	30.	Invention	.40
15.	Literature	1.80	31.	Transportation	.30
16.	Persons not noted	1.80	32.	Art	.20

It is only natural that war should occupy first place, when one considers that Prof. Garth's study was published in 1916, and that the papers used in the research work were in 1913, 1914 and 1915.

The relative variation of the thirty-two topics (found by dividing the average deviation by the true average) was then determined. The least variable type was listed first and the others followed in order.

1.	Sports	17.	War
2.	Deaths and births	18.	Persons not noted
3.	Government	19.	Religion
4.	Weather	20.	Industries
5.	Society	21.	Literature
6.	Business	22.	Art
7.	Crimes	23.	Jokes
8.	Politics	24.	Agriculture
9.	Safety and accidents	25.	Science and discovery
10.	Noted persons	26.	Fashion
11.	Benevolence	27.	Exposition
12.	Marriage	28.	Transportation
13.	Finance	29.	Divorce
14.	Improvements	30.	Inventions
15.	Theater	31.	Amusements and recreation
16.	Education	32.	Household arts

As seen by these two classifications, crime was sixth in amount of space, but seventh in point of least variability. It was found to be more constant as an interest than education and religion. Divorce had a considerable fluctuation

but the interest in marriage was found to be stronger and to vary less than divorce. The average per cent for marriage was more than three times as great.

Another study of the newspaper was made, in 1924, by Roger William Riis, in an attempt to answer the question "Are newspapers doing their duty?"

Mr. Riis says:

> "The American paper is a standardized paper. There are extremes in it, to be sure; but taken in masses it is the same in Maine as in New Mexico. The sole distinction is that in New York, for instance, the space devoted to business is filled with market reports; in St. Paul, largely grain; Portland, Ore., forestry, fishing and shipping."

In Mr. Riis' study, he considered eighteen American, five English, five French and five German newspapers. He found the amount of space given various types of news and classified the papers according to the amount of space each gave. In the American newspapers, the following order was found: (1) business, (2) sports, (3) amusements, (4) politics, (5) police news, (6) foreign, (7) arts, (8) women, (9) social, (10) prohibition, (11) radio, (12) theater, (13) education, (14) weather, (15) health, (16) labor, (17) liberalism, (18) Ku Klux Klan.

In the English newspapers, the news in the order of its extent was: (1) foreign, (2) business, (3) sports, (4) politics, (5) police news, (6) arts, (7) theater, (8) social, (9) gardens, (10) education, (11) Ireland, (12) weather, (13) housing, (14) amusements, (15) liberalism, (16) women, (17) radio.

The order of the news in the French newspapers was: (1) foreign, (2) amusements, (3) business, (4) police news, (5) politics, (6) arts, (7) radio, (8) theater, (9) sports, (10) social, (11) education, (12) weather, (13) health, (14) liberalism.

For the German papers, the order of classification was: (1) foreign, (2) business, (3) politics, (4) amusements, (5) arts, (6) police news, (7) sports, (8) theater, (9) liberalism, (10) weather.

It will be observed that while foreign news held only sixth place in the American newspaper, it was first in the English, German and French. Business having first place in American newspapers was second in English and German, and third in French. Sports, which held second place in American newspapers was third in English, ninth in French and seventh in German.

Police news, including all accounts of crime in the three countries, more nearly correlated than any of the other classifications. It ranked fifth in American papers, the same in the English, fourth in the French and sixth in the German. Although the American press has been termed "the crime press," the English papers had relatively the same proportion of their space given to such news.

In order to determine the value of the studies mentioned in this chapter, certain difficulties in their viewpoint and method should be observed.

A common defect in most of the studies was a failure to define the terms used. One is left to his own opinion as to what crime, scandal and other types of news include.

1. One of the chief faults was that the importance of position was overlooked in the study of the news. A one-column story on page one will undoubtedly get the attention of the reader more than a longer story buried on an inside page.

2. In considering the newspapers, some investigators included the editorial which has no more justification for being classed with the news story than the headline and the illustrations, which were not considered in any of the studies. The headline is as closely related to its story as one's head to one's body. The casual observer, having been attracted by character as shown in someone's face, will want to cultivate his friendship, just as the reader, when attracted by a headline, will pursue the story to find out more concerning it.

If the headline fails to catch attention, the story is no more likely to be read than one's personality is to be cultivated when his countenance is dull and lacking in expression.

3. Another point which seems to be overlooked by those who study the press is the small-town newspaper. When one considers the aggregate circulation of these papers, it is evident that the small papers should not be ignored. Although there is no way of proving such a statement, it is probable that the small-town newspapers exert vastly more influence than do the metropolitan dailies.

Elbert H. Baker of the Cleveland Plain Dealer made this significant remark in his lecture during Journalism Week at the School of Journalism of the University of Missouri in 1925:

> "As I look over the newspaper field from time to time I seem to find the public's estimate of the newspaper falling into three lines: the great majority who cordially believe in and depend upon their favorite newspaper; others who are vocal in condemnation of all newspapers, including their makers; and others who merely tolerate the newspaper they happen to buy.
>
> "I rejoice greatly in our friends, but, after an experience of nearly fifty years in the newspaper business, I am inclined to agree most heartily with the view recently expressed by one of my associates, 'Blessed be the critics of our newspapers.'"

This criticism of the press has been a stimulus for certain experiments which have been made during recent years, in handling crime news.

Other criticisms have evoked editorial comment and have brought about scientific analyses of the news found in the daily papers. An example of this is the open letter written by the Christian Century, an undenominational religious weekly, to the Chicago papers, asking them to declare a thirty-day holiday on news of crime and to give more attention to significant news of the day. In part, the appeal was as follows:

> "Gentlemen: We cannot doubt that, as citizens, you who control the great newspapers of Chicago share with all your intelligent and respectable neighbors a grave concern for the evil effects which the press is having upon the moral life of the community. You are citizens, highly respected citizens, and most, if not all, of you are Christian churchmen. . . . It is needless to say that your news papers do not reflect the moral standard or tastes or habits of thought of the preponderant majority of their constituency, any more than they reflect the moral standards or tastes or habits of thought of their proprietors.
>
> "Parents on every hand are baffled by the problem of keeping decently clean and normal the minds of their youth, exposed as they inevitably are to the unwholesome picture of life which they see in

the press. Students of civic life are openly declaring journalism's preoccupation with crime to be a majority cause of much of the moral delinquency of our time.

"The man-in-the-street is more inclined every day to believe that there is an unholy alliance between the newspaper and the crooked influences in politics and society. Along with this there grows a legend of an innate affinity between the newspaper and the unclean. . . .

"Our proposal is this: That you, the proprietors of the daily press of Chicago, agree together upon a united shift in news emphasis for one month. In such a meeting it could be decided that all newspapers of Chicago would for thirty days 'play down' crime, bestiality and the sordid aspects of life, and 'play up' those really significant events and constructive activities that make citizenship in such a city and such a land a high privilege."

The appeal did not receive any response except to arouse a flurry of argument from papers, including the St. Louis Star, New York World, Boston Post and Manchester Union.

The St. Louis Star commented:

"It is a view shared by many excellent people, as well as some of the considerable class of more or less vain persons, who are sure that they could run many lines of business, and especially newspapers, far better than those who are conducting them, and have made their work a study for years. . . ."

The New York World made a careful survey of the front pages of the leading New York morning papers of one day, with the following results

Crime: World, 1; Times, 0; Herald-Tribune, 1; American 0.

Foreign affairs: World, 1; Times, 2; Herald-Tribune, 2; American, 2.

Public affairs: World, 3; Times, 4; Herald-Tribune, 3; American, 1.

Miscellaneous: World, 8; Times, 7; Herald-Tribune, 10; American, 8.

The survey was continued to see whether the "significant events and constructive activities" asked for by the Christian Century were properly covered, with this result:

"1. The story of a policeman wrongly convicted set at liberty on motion of the prosecuting attorney

"2. The story of a boy, 4 years old, heroically rescued from death as he floated down the Passaic River on an ice cake

"3. The story of a previously unpublished speech of Abraham Lincoln

"4. The story of the heroic efforts to save Floyd Collins

"5. The story of an aviator carrying serum to a quarantined liner"

This, the World declared to be a fair average of all days, and held that if this is true of New York dailies, it could be assumed to be approximately correct for dailies in other cities.

The Boston Post said that neither the papers of Chicago nor of any other city devote any great part of their space to accounts of crime. Further:

"Papers do print accounts of evil deeds as they come along, as part of their news offering, but generally not more than the doings of the day warrant. A newspaper that fails to record such events is not, in the truest sense, a newspaper at all.

"Does anyone believe that the criminals like to have their deeds recorded? Would they not prefer the darkness of complete silence as to what they do? Could they not keep on doing them more effectively if no newspaper ever revealed their iniquity, and so made their apprehension the more probable?

"In any question of this sort we would like to have the votes of the criminals. That vote would show to a certainty whether or not the bad men of the land would prefer silence or publicity—and we think that they would vote for silence."

The Manchester Union says that there is probably something in the belief that notoriety influences some criminals; that it causes some weak-minded youths to commit crime, largely to show off. But, "if after they are apprehended," the Union believes, "other weak-minded and more delicately nurtured folks crowd around them, and fill the air with moans over them, crying out that the criminals must not be punished, weeping maudlin tears over them, the process of hero-making is completed. The criminal sees himself a martyr, because the sentimentalists declare him one."

The Union also urges that "stiff sentences for the newspapers to chronicle" be tried.

The Christian Science Monitor thinks that if the newspapers really believe that publicity deters crime, it is logical that they should give crime still more space. "The efficacy of the remedy ought to increase in proportion to the size of the type."

The Christian Century says that "the surest method of becoming a hero of public attention is to commit a crime. Kill your mother, and tomorrow the press will be devoting more space to your slightest word than to that of the president of the United States. It will photograph and interview you; compete without financial limit for such diaries, letters or other written material as you may desire to market; and will follow you to acquittal, prison or the gallows itself with the fanfare of fame."

Some of the most representative of the experiments in crime news publication—reactions to the stimuli of criticism—will be discussed in two groups: (1) those newspapers eliminating crime news; (2) those newspapers segregating crime news.

In the first group will be included the Fayetteville (N. C.) Observer and a special "crimeless" edition of the Camden (N. J.) Courier.

The second group will include the Des Moines Register, the Rocky Mountain News and Times, the Decatur Review and a special Sunday edition of the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The Fayetteville Observer's plan was to cover a period of fifteen days (April 1925). During that time it was to refrain from publishing any crime items in its columns. At the end of this period it intended to let the readers determine whether the policy should be permanently adopted.

The paper had to abandon its plan when only half of the time had elapsed because of the vigorous protest of the subscribers and advertisers. The Observer then asked its readers if they wanted crime news published. The replies were sixty to one in favor of such publication.

Another experiment in crime news elimination was made by a layman, Judge John B. Kates, in Camden, N. J. Following Judge Kates' statement that the newspapers were operating on a mistaken policy in featuring crime news, the Courier offered to let him have complete control of a single issue.

Judge Kates accepted and announced his policy to be that no crime news should be printed unless it was a major crime, when it would be printed on an inside page, omitting details. The correspondents were instructed to send only articles of civic enterprise, good roads and social activities.

After his test, he was still of the opinion that, for the sake of the community, crime should be published on an inside page. This news, he suggests, should be treated in less detail, and should have small headlines.

The Des Moines Register's experiment in crime news segregation began April 6, 1925. All local and telegraphic crime stories were placed on the second page. On page one of the first issue was the following announcement:

> "Beginning with this edition of the Register and continuing until Saturday, crime news will be segregated on an inside page.
>
> "The experiment is being made purely as a test. No effort will be made to curtail or increase the ordinary amount of crime news, the only change being the fact that it will be all together on one page.
>
> "The newspaper decided to make the test following a suggestion made by the Des Moines Federation of Women's Clubs.
>
> "The Register, however, reserves the right to print on its front page during the test week any story of 'outstanding criminal importance' as it would treat a strikingly important sport, real estate or society story."

On April 14, this news story appeared in the New York Times:

> "The Des Moines Register, which a week ago instituted the policy of segregating crime news on an inside page, has announced that the plan would be continued temporarily.
>
> "In the opinion of the paper, there has not yet been 'an opportunity for conclusive findings as to the wisdom' of the plan 'or of its practicability or impracticability' from the standpoint of public service.
>
> "Consequently, subject to an 'emergency calling for extraordinary treatment,' the policy will be maintained."

In an article in the Editor and Publisher for June 13, Gardner Cowles, publisher of the Register, said that the segregation of routine crime news had met with popular response and would be continued. He further said that the suppression idea was erroneous.

> "No one here believes in suppressing news of any kind. As a matter of fact we believe that most evils are more quickly corrected by being flooded with the searching light of publicity than in any other way."

The routine crimes were segregated as sports and financial reports. Crimes of particular import were placed on the front page as the unusual sports stories are. The results of the experiment, as given by Mr. Crowles, were that "thousands of letters were received praising it; several hundred organizations such as clubs and churches passed resolutions commending it; and that, while a few street sales were lost, on the whole the experiment helped rather than hurt the circulation."

The crime news segregation test, conducted by the Rocky Mountain News and Times, was carried on for a month and found to be successful. The policy was that only such crime news as proceedings against public officials or those crimes which particularly concern public welfare, should be

allowed on the first page. If the crimes were important, not because of the cause of the crime, but because of the prominence of the persons affected, they were also placed on page one.

Following the test the policy was declared as "an overwhelming success," evidenced by the increased number of subscriptions and the apparent stimulation of the reader's interest.

The segregation of crime news which was carried on by the Decatur (Ill.) Review for a week was for the purpose of showing that only a small portion of the news was of this nature. During that week, all telegraphic crime news was segregated in the lower left-hand corner of the front page, with the column headed "Crime." Two conflicting opinions arose from this experiment. The majority of ministers contended that undue attention was called to it, while a few said that it placed it where it could be skipped without reading. Other citizens commended the plan as being the proper way to handle news of that type. The New York Times, when telling of the Review's having resumed its unusual make-up, quoted this statement:

> "The Review has proved its point that only a small portion of the news printed is of crime."

Mayor Arthur E. Nelson, who was guest editor of the St. Paul Pioneer Press on Sunday, Oct. 18, 1925, produced an excellent type of conservative newspaper.

Crime in this special edition of the Pioneer Press was allotted less than two columns of page 6. The crime news included four stories: (1) a history of the by-gone glories of a famous old and abandoned house selected by a degenerate for a murder; (2) the police promise of an early arrest for two bank bandits; (3) a holdup of a grocery store in Muscatine, Ia., where the proprietor was seriously wounded; (4) the approaching trial of a South Dakota murderer and a brief summary of the killer's confessions.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL SURVEY OF THE CRIME SITUATION

Crime has become a problem, which now holds the attention of all the thinking classes of the country. Arguments, discussions and suggested remedies are being found on every hand; and newspapers, magazines and booklets contain more material on this subject than ever before.

Does this topic warrant so much attention? Are the publications justified in giving it so much space? When one considers the statistical reports that have been made by the crime commissions, scientific investigators and police officials, the situation seems alarming.

Although it is impossible to obtain adequate statistics on criminality, the ones available are illuminating and more or less reliable. *Crime and Penology*, which has just been released from the press, is a most comprehensive reference, and contains a vast amount of valuable material. The author, Dr. John Lewis Gillin, professor of sociology in the University of Wisconsin, has made an intensive study of the subject and the material he presents will be a great help as a basis for scientific investigation.

Dr. Gillin mentions the lack of accurate statistics on the number of crimes committed in the United States, and of accurate record of any particular form of crime, such as homicide. The Bureau of the Census at Washington issued a report on "Prisoners and Juvenile Delinquents in the United States" (1910), which is one of the most reliable sources for statistics. Most of Dr. Gillin's statistics are taken from this report.

Certain other studies besides this census throw light upon the problem. Some of the studies were made by cities, while a few of the states have collected statistics for the state as a whole. The most outstanding of these is, perhaps, the Cleveland Foundation Survey.

Twenty-eight cities of the United States were included in a study made by E. L. Hoffman of the Prudential Insurance Company to discover the homicide rate. In these twenty-eight cities he found that the rate from 1911 to 1915 was 8.1 per 100,000 population. In 1916 to 1920 it was 8.5; 1921, 9.3.

According to a report made by the American Bar Association not long ago, one out of every 12,000 people in the United States is a victim of murder. The proportion in Great Britain is one out of 634,635. There was an average of 74 a year during the last three years, and out of these, only five each year remained undiscovered.

In an address before the Wisconsin Forum of New York City, in 1908, Chief Justice Taft said that since 1885 there had been 131,951 murders and homicides in the United States. Of these murderers only 2, 286 were executed.

Dr. Gillin says:

> "Within a given year 500,000 men, women and children have been locked up in penal and correctional institutions in this country. This is no adequate measure of the amount of criminality since many of the criminals escape arrest and conviction. Nevertheless, even on this basis it means that one out of every 200 persons in the United States is put in jail or prison every year.
>
> "It does not take into account those who are arraigned at court and are acquitted, discharged, receive a suspended sentence, or are

put on probation. It ought to be added that the great majority of this half million persons are committed to minor penal institutions such as jails.

"Based upon the discharges from penal institutions only, 6 per cent are sent to what may be called the 'highest institutions of crime.' During the seven years ending Dec. 31, 1919, there were 250,000 arrests in Massachusetts, of which 90,050 were for drunkenness and 56,469 for other crimes."

In England, for the five years which ended 1913 to 1914, there were 437.5 persons to each 100,000 of the population; for the five years ended 1918 to 1919, 157.4; for the year 1919 to 1920, 98.4; and for the year 1920 to 1921, 116.7. These figures, according to Dr. Gillin, give a prisoner rate.

Of Germany, he says that before the war the imperial statistics on crime were excellent and he gives the following statistics: during 1903 there were 50,219 juveniles convicted; in 1909 there were 797,112 acts dealt with by the courts of the German Empire as crimes or offenses. These statistics, unlike those of the United States and England, are based upon trials rather than upon convictions.

From these figures it is evident that the United States is pre-eminent in the matter of criminality. A comparison of the cities of the United States with those of Great Britain and other cities on the continent, shows that the rate is very much higher in the United States.

In 1916, Chicago, one-third the size of London, had 105 murders as compared with London's 9—nearly 12 times as many. In that year Chicago totaled more than London during the period from 1910 to 1914, inclusive. At this time, also, Chicago with only 2,500,000 people had 20 more murders than the whole of England and Wales with 38,000,000 population. In 1918 Chicago had 14 more murders than England and Wales combined, while, in 1919, it had 6 times the number of murders committed in London.

Quoting from Dr. Gillin:

"Much the same situation exists in the other cities of the United States. In 1916, New York had 6 times the number of homicides (murders and manslaughters) as London for the same year, and only 10 less than all of England and Wales. Comparing the cities of about the same size, Fosdick found that Glasgow had 38 homicides while Philadelphia had 281 during the period 1916 to 1918.

"In 1915 St. Louis had eleven times the number of homicides of Liverpool, and in 1916 eight times the number. Los Angeles, one-twentieth the size of London, had 2 more homicides in 1916 than London, while in 1917 she had 10 more. Cleveland, O., one-tenth the size of London, in 1917 had three times the number of homicides of London, twice the number in 1918 and six times the number in 1920.

"For every robbery, or assault with intent to rob, in 1920 in London, there were 17 such crimes committed in Cleveland. Cleveland had as many murders during the first three months of 1921 as London had during all of 1920. Liverpool, about one and one-half times larger than Cleveland, in 1919 had only one robbery for 31 in Cleveland, and only one murder and one manslaughter as compared with Cleveland's three.

"Every year in Cleveland there are more robberies and assaults to rob than in all England, Scotland and Wales together, and when compared with other American cities, Cleveland does not appear to any special disadvantage.

"During 1921 St. Louis had 241 robberies, while Cleveland had 272. During the same period St. Louis had nearly twice the number of complaints of burglary and house-breaking. According to the Chicago Crime Commission, Chicago had 330 murders in 1919, 110 to the million population, while Great Britain had only nine to each million of its population, and Canada but thirteen. Sir Basil Thompson is authority for the statement that in 1921 the number of prisoners in all the prisons in Canada was just the same, 1,930, as the number in a single penitentiary in Illinois."

Lawrence Veiller in his series of articles on "The Rising Tide of Crime," published in the World's Work, gives some statistics even later than those given by Dr. Gillin. Mr. Veiller says that in 1922 there were 9,500 persons killed in crimes of violence in the United States; in 1923 there were 10,000; and in 1924 there were 11,000.

Mr. Veiller compares these figures with the facts in England and Wales, where in the year 1921 there were 63 murders and 86 other homicides, including those in city and country districts. During that same year there were 237 homicides comitted in New York alone.

He compared the total number of homicides, 151, in England and Wales with that of Chicago in 1923, where there were 389 homicides. Chicago's population is approximately 3,000,000 comparee to a population of 38,000,000 for England and Wales.

Mr. Veiller goes on to show that the excessive crime rate is not confined to the American city, nor is "the rising tide of crime" found solely in murder—for instance, robberies are thirty-six times as prevalent in New York as they are in London.

The following figures given by Theodore E. Burton in the Current History Magazine show these facts, together with the date at which the statistics were taken:

Homicide Rate Per 100,000

United States[3]	1911–21	7.2
Italy	1910–20	3.6
Australia	1911–20	1.9
South Africa	1912-18	1.8
New Zealand	1911–22	0.9
Ireland	1911–19	0.9
Spain	1911-17	0.9
Norway	1910–19	0.8
England and Wales	1911–22	0.8
Quebec	1911–21	0.5
Ontario	1911-21	0.5
Scotland	1911–21	0.4
Holland	1911–18	0.3
Switzerland	1911–20	0.2

3. By United States is meant the registration area, including 82 per cent of the population in 1920.

In the United States the homicide rate is double that of Italy; four times that of Australia and South Africa; eight times that of New Zealand, Ireland, or Spain; nine times that of England and Wales or of Norway; eighteen times that of Scotland; twenty-four times that in Holland and thirty-six times as great as Switzerland.

Is crime on the increase? This question has been answered in the affirmative by general consensus of opinion for the last few years. Several groups of statistics concerning this point will be used here.

Regarding the extent of murder in this country, Andrew D. White says:

> "The annual statistics of crime published in the Chicago Tribune of December 31, 1910, which were gathered with the greatest care and conscientiousness, and which I have verified by careful study in more than half the states of our Union during the last fifteen years, show that in the United States the number of homicides (by which is meant in all, save a very few cases, murders) was, during the year just closed, 8,975, and that this is an increase of nearly 900 over the number during the year preceding."

On the basis of crimes punished rather than crimes committed, the census figures show certain facts. Eliminating commitments for the nonpayment of fines, it shows an increase from 1904 to 1910 of 34 per cent, while the increase of population during the period was only 11 per cent. However, it was considered safer to take the increase of prisoners in confinement on given date, since the enumeration in 1910 was more complete than in 1904. The increase was 21 per cent between 1904 and 1910.

A comparison between the ratio of prisoners enumerated on a given date to 100,000 of the population from 1880 to 1910 is as follows:

1880	116.9
1890	131.5
1904	99.0
1910	121.2

The ratio per 100,000 of population of sentenced prisoners exclusive of those awaiting trial, those in prison for non-payment of fine, and of those confined in military or naval prisons is as follows:

1880	98.7
1890	106.7
1904	99.0
1910	107.9

Of the last census report of prisoners and juvenile delinquents, Dr. Gillin says:

> "It is as impossible to be certain that the apparent increase from 99 per 100,000 in 1904 to 107.9 in 1910 is real—as the census points out. It may be due to the more complete enumeration in the latter. If these figures are at all reliable, so far as criminality is measured by the sentenced prisoners in institutions on a given date in each of these years, there has been neither increase nor decrease.
>
> "Figures released by the Federal Census Bureau in 1922 for newspaper publication indicate that the 'homicide death rate' rose from 7.1 per 100,000 population in 1920 to 8.5 in 1921. Suicides increased in the same period from 10.2 to 12.6"

In an article on "Criminal Statistics in Germany, France and England, Arthur McDonald shows that in the period between 1882 and 1905 there was

an increase in crime in Germany, a stationary condition in France and a decrease in England.

Dr. Gillin quotes from Hobhouse and Brockway, *English Prisons Today:*

> "It is good to be able to say at the outset that our prison population is steadily diminishing. In 1876-1877, when prison administration was first centralized, the daily average population in local prisons was, broadly, 20,000. In 1913-1914 (the year before the war) it was 14,300. In 1918-1919 (the last war year) it was 7,000. In 1920-1921 it was 8,400. . . . The figures we have given relate to local prisons only, but the return of offenders sentenced to convict prisons shows a similar continuing decrease.
>
> "The daily average population in convict prisons in 1876-1877 was, broadly, 10,000, as compared with 2,700 in 1913-1914; 1,200 in 1918-1919; and 1,400 in 1920-1921. These, added to the figures for local prisons, make a total average daily population of approximately 30,000 in 1876-1877, as compared with 17,000 in 1913-1914; 8,200 in 1918-1919; and 9,800 in 1920-1921. The prison population last year was, therefore, considerably less than one-third what it was forty years ago."

Lawrence Veiller mentions as an indication of the increase in crime, the fact that statistics taken from forty of the leading crime insurance companies of the country show that embezzlement increased 640 per cent from 1910 to 1923 and burglary more than 1096 per cent in that same length of time. In the same thirteen-year period the losses paid by the burglary insurance companies for embezzlements and burglaries increased 816 per cent. The following figures indicate this loss:

1910	$ 2,282,126
1919	10,293,909
1923	20,912,706

There is no more adequate way of finding just how much crime costs the country, than there is for finding out its extent, or its decrease or increase. An estimation has been made that the cost is $2,500,000 a day.

Figures gained from different sources by Dr. Gillin show that:

> In 1920, according to the reports of the Wisconsin tax commissions, the battle against crime cost the taxpayers of Wisconsin over $6,000,000 above all income from the houses of correction and the state penal and correctional institutions.
>
> The latest available figures from the State of New York indicate that it cost the people of the state more than $6,000,000 to maintain the inmates of state prisons, reformatories, penitentiaries, New York City institutions and county jails during the year 1921.
>
> The Chicago Crime Commission has estimated that the property loss from thefts in that city in 1919 amounted to more than $12,000,000. The burglary insurance rates are higher in that city than in any other in the United States.
>
> The State Board of Charities and Correction of Virginia in 1915 estimated the cost of crime to the taxpayers of that state as $440,528.
>
> In 1914 the criminals of Ohio cost the people of that state $8,500,000, an increase of 79 per cent over the cost of 1906, during which period the population had increased but 10.9 per cent.

The United States census report proportions this cost to the different classes of crimes: 20.4 per cent to larceny, 10.5 per cent to homicides and 6.3 per cent to drunkenness.

William J. Burns, the famous detective and former head of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, estmates that more than $25,000,000 is stolen in property from the railroad, express and steamship companies. His total estimate of the financial loss through the operation of criminals in 1924 is $3,820,000,000. This is made up as follows:

1.	Embezzlement	$ 120,000,000
2.	Credit frauds	400,000,000
3.	Burglary, larceny and petty thefts	250,000,000
4.	Forgery and worthless checks	100,000,000
5.	Seaport robberies, piracies, custom frauds	100,000,000
6.	Railroad thefts	25,000,000
7.	Stock frauds	1,700,000,000
8.	Tax and income frauds	1,000,000,000
9.	Arson	50,000,000
10.	Miscellaneous	75,000,000

Many theories have been advanced regarding the cause of the abnormal crime condition in this country, the most common of which should be mentioned. Theodore E. Burton from Ohio discusses three of these—the protection of the individual, the laxity of the criminal procedure and compassion for the criminal.

The opportunities to escape punishment are so great that they alone contribute vastly to the amount of crime. While in England the offender is guilty until he is proved innocent, the reverse is true in the United States.

The average American is averse to harsh treatment of anyone. The protection of the individual is secured not only by provisions of the federal and state constitutions, but also by public opinion. The countries of Europe differ in their criminal jurisprudence from the American in that their central objective is the supremacy of the law and punishment of crime. The value of this policy is reflected in their statistical records of crime.

The laxity of criminal procedure is expressed in these significant words by Chief Justice Taft:

> "The trial of a criminal seems like a game of chance, with all the chances in favor of the criminal, and if he escapes he seems to have the sympathy of a sporting public."

The chances of his escaping punishment may be illustrated by a report of the warden of Sing Sing prison, that of the 458 murderers sentenced to death in the state of New York from 1889 to 1923, only 298 were executed.

Lack of promptness after the commission of the crime and the regard for technical errors are main causes for the laxity of criminal procedure.

Lawrence Veiller in the World's Work refers to Judge Kavanaugh's list upon which he recorded nearly 800 cases where courts had reversed conviction without any regard to the innocence or guilt of the defendant, but only considering whether the game as played in the lower court had been played according to the rules. Two cases taken from his list illustrate the way in which this was done.

> "In 1907, in Missouri, a man named Campbell who had committed a terrible crime was set free, after his conviction, by the

Supreme Court of Missouri because the word 'the' was left out of the last line of his indictment.

"An Italian laborer named Guiseppe Visealli was murdered in Pennsylvania. Because of the difficulty his employers experienced in pronouncing the name, he was called and became known altogether as 'Joe Wilson.' His assassin was indicted for killing 'Joe Wilson' and conclusively proved guilty. The two names slipped out in the trial but, as every one in the court room knew the identity, nothing was thought of it until the case reached the Supreme Court. There the case was reversed for the reason that no explanation appeared as to the identity of the two names. A new trial was ordered and upon the second trial with the witnesses scattered, all interest in the tragedy dead, the murderer was found 'not guilty.'

"On appeal, the English High Court would have sent out for witnesses (Judge Kavanaugh comments) and made sure whether the two names covered the same person and the assassin would have gone to his doom.'

Another way in which many criminals escape punishment is through the plea of insanity or of mental defect. In connection with this, Mr. Veiller refers to the Franks murder. He says:

"What happens when this practice is extended has been strikingly demonstrated in the recent Leopold-Loeb case in Chicago, in which the plea, not of insanity, but of mental defect was successfully raised so as to cheat the gallows and permit two degenerate murderers, instead of paying the forfeit of their lives for their heinous crime, or spending the rest of their lives in an insane asylum, to be confined to prison for a period the length of which only the future can foretell."

Senator Burton takes this stand:

"The present methods of punishment may not be altogether ideal, but in determining the status of the criminal, it is best to brush aside certain modern theories, such as that of Lombroso, that the causes of crime must be based entirely on physical criteria; also the theory which would deny individual responsibility. There is no doubt merit in the suggestion that we study environment, psychiatry, psychology, biology, sociology and so forth, but let us not be befogged. Aside from some derelicts or degenerates, who should be incarcerated or permanently detached from society, crimes are the action of those who are free agents, and in solving this problem we must not deny the existence of free will."

Secretary Wilbur, in an address in 1922 before the American Bar Association, proposed that insanity be no longer treated as a defense to a criminal charge, and that evidence on that subject be excluded from the jury. After conviction, the defendant, upon the suggestion of insanity, should be examined by a board of alienists with a view to determining what should be done. This same suggestion has also been made by others.

Compassion for the criminal is found in our modern society as excessive kindness always arises when a community is excited. Modern Robin Hoods are

frequently wept over as was Claude Duval, a dashing highwayman who caused anguish in the hearts of fair ladies in the court of Charles II.

An epitaph said to be in Covent Garden is illustrative of misplaced sentiment that is found not only among women but also among men at the present time.

> "Old Tyborn's glory, England's illustrious thief!
> Duval the ladies' joy; Duval the ladies' grief."

CHAPTER III

GENERAL CONSIDERATION OF CRIME NEWS

Pulitzer, Hearst and the elder Bennett were bitterly abused because they printed sensational stories, yet in no other period has the press been so severly criticised as in the last decade. Much of this criticism was made by prejudiced and ill-informed persons; however, there are found among the critics, leaders in every field. A well-known criticism they have made is that too much space and prominence is given to crime news.

From a review of statistics it is evident that crime is an outstanding problem in this country—one which should have the thought and attention of the American people.

In the study made by Dr. Alvan A. Tenney, it will be remembered that the Hebrew interest in drama and education; the German, in music and the Italian, in art were reflected in the papers printed in the language of those countries. Mr. Garth's study, made during the war, showed that much greater space was devoted to accounts of war than to any other type of news. Judging from this, one would expect to find a great amount of crime news.

The United States, with far the highest crime rate does not show any decided difference in the amount of crime news—as observed from Mr. Riis' study.

He found that there was a total of 10 per cent of the space given to crime news in this country, as compared to France 8, England 6 and Germany 3. This comparison does not correlate with that of the amount of crime in the four countries.

Carl C. Dickey, in his article on "Dragons of the Press," refers to Mr. Riis' statistics concerning the American newspaper. He says:

> "His figure is surprisingly low in view of the criticism that too much space was devoted to crime news, and it gives some evidence that the criticism was based on the impression created by the orgies of sensationalism rather than upon the general presentation of crime news. In view of the large number of murders and violent crimes in this country, as compared with other countries, the percentage is very small."

That crime news occupies a relatively small portion of the front page space was indicated by a study made of eight leading newspapers, in the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce of the University of Pennsylvania. The study included editions from 1911 to 1915 and October, 1924, to February, 1925.

News was classified under the following headings: politics, foreign news, business, sports, science and art, society, accident, religious and obituary. Police news was used broadly to include not only stories of the actual commission of crime and their investigation but also all criminal court proceedings and accident cases involving a certain amount of criminality. In terms of per cent the results were as follows:

Police news	22.5
Politics and government	38.5
Foreign news	12.5
Accident news, including disaster and scientific comment	14.5
Business news	5.0
Arts and science	3.0
Each to society, religion, obituaries and sport	1.0

In the latter period (1924-1925) there was an increase of 3.5 per cent in space given to accident stories and 20 per cent in arts and science. There was a decrease of .5 per cent in religious news and sports, since 1911-1915, had increased from one-half of 1 per cent to 1 per cent.

The misconception is also caused by the fallacy of measuring the policy of "the press" by a few of the most wayward members of the press family. The space and prominence given crime news vary with their editorial policies.

The headline is a factor which has also been largely responsible for the "crime press" theory. Helen Ogden Mahin recently made an interesting study of the headline, its development and significance. She says:

> "I believe that it is a spontaneous expression of the social forces; that it is essentially the product of the fundamental conditions of democracy, which have prevailed in America as never before in any other country; and that in certain aspects of its development, it reflects the peculiar temperament of the American people."

Miss Mahin shows in her book that the headline, "the most significant feature in the highly specialized technique of the American newspaper," has not come into existence and developed as a work of "conscious invention," but that it has come at the call of a peculiar class of events.

Further, she says that the headline is the "instrument of expression of a whole people in their supreme emotional crisis and there is only one interest of universally potent significance—the interest in life."

Scandal, or gossip as it is known in the primary group, is a phase of the general subject of life. The factory girl does not come in contact with the debutante, but, nevertheless, she is extremely interested in all of her activities —her romances and her scandals.

An illustration of the same principle is found in the Hall-Mills murder case. In an editorial in The Nation in 1922, there is a discussion of the space occupied by the case in certain New York papers.

In the Times, the editorial says, this case was on the first page every day but two in October, 1922; it "loitered on the left-hand side of the page ten days; and then climbed into eminence in the display column at the extreme right and stuck for the rest of the month.

"Only Lloyd George's resignation, Judge Hand's liquor ruling and a Hylan bus scandal were able to elbow it to the left. Thrice the Times spread the head of the story over three columns—and this in the paper that prides itself on belittling the sensational, on 'playing down' murder and divorce scandals!"

Of the Evening Post, the editorial says:

> "The most modest of New York newspapers wavered until the middle of the month; thence onward the romance of love and murder appeared unerringly at the top of the front page. Meanwhile the other papers displayed ribbon heads across eight columns of text; the inside pages were full of it."

These further comments made by The Nation are also pertinent here:

> "The response was unerring, for the newspapers had not worked up the public, but had simply responded to the welling interest of the millions in a great human drama.
>
> "For this is the cardinal truth which journalists learn. It is not the important public events which most interest millions—not politics or economics or even wars and strikes, but the private dramas, the

'human interest stories', the great dramatization of the half-thought dreams and hopes and fears of every man and every woman.

"Mrs. Mills read the novels which the rector gave her with bated breath because she could read herself into every line; the public read of Mrs. Mills because it could dramatize into terms of its own experience the release from daily drudgery which a new love seemed to bring her.

"News, a puzzled editor once said, is anything striking—but it is 'big news' in proportion as it might happen to any reader. It is the personal, of no importance to the world, for which people will most eagerly pay 3 cents. That was the great discovery that enabled Joseph Pulitzer in four years to build the circulation of the World from 12,000 to 200,000; that is why the Evening Journal today has more than twenty times the circulation of the New York Evening Post, why the Saturday Evening Post has more than eighty times the circulation of The Nation.

"Years ago a prominent man committed suicide. Shortly after, a beautiful woman killed herself. His career had been ruined by his wife's brother because he had deserted his wife to return to this beautiful woman, his mistress of earlier years. A dirty scandal? Their names were—Anthony and Cleopatra."

The way in which the story is handled often gives rise to certain criticism, an example of which is the disclosure of clues on which the authorities are working while suspects are being searched for. The responsibility for this, however, would first rest upon the officials who disclose the vital facts.

Sir Robert Peacock, chief constable of Manchester, made the following statement at a meeting of the International Police Conference in New York:

"While it may not be desirable in certain cases to circulate information regarding crimes and persons wanted, it has been found beneficial in many instances and valuable assistance has been rendered to the police by the publication in the press of the details of crimes and persons wanted in connection therewith."

The element of suggestion has been discussed in connection with the newspaper by different persons, among whom is Frances Fenton Bernard. The power of suggestion as a stimulus to crime and other antisocial acts is the theme upon which Mrs. Bernard based her thesis.

While the clippings and case studies that she presented show that there are indications that suggestion found in the newspaper has a harmful effect there is still to be considered, on the other hand, the influence of suggestion in preventing numerous crimes, through showing the ultimate futility and punishment for criminal acts.

Although there may be a few unsocial youths who might be led to commit crime through a perverted desire for getting their names in the newspapers, there can only be a small percentage of such types. Miss Edith Johnson of the Oklahoma City Daily Oklahoman says:

"The publication of crime news is a greater deterrent of crime than the lay mind realizes. If the reader could scan a roster of all of the men and women who visit newspaper offices, begging that news of their wrong-doings be suppressed, he would be amazed. Ninety-eight per cent of the law-breakers believe that the only sin is being found out."

Mrs. Bernard cites as an illustration of the desire for notoriety, a case in Belleville, Ill., where Willis Clark, a young negro was hanged for murder:

> "While preparations were being made to drop him into eternity, Clark joked with the sheriff and asked that a good job be made of it. He said upon the scaffold that if he did not get a 'good write-up' from the newspapers he would haunt them. . . ."

This would seem to indicate an effort on the part of Clark to keep up his courage rather than an actual desire for publicity. The same sort of incident occurred when Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold were in jail awaiting the termination of their trial. They joked with the reporters and manifested a keen desire in the daily accounts in the newspapers.

In regard to the effect of certain types of news on the public, Edward McKernon, writing for Harper's, says:

> "There never is a disaster involving great suffering and loss of life that does not cause the illness, insanity or death of persons at great distances from the scene who had no relation to the original victims or acquaintance with them. Reports of insanity and suicide attributed to such causes are common. Your physician will tell you that thousands of people are barely hanging on life and can be jarred off like ripe fruit from a tree. Every newspaper man knows that a week of rain will double the daily average of suicides reported to the police. Yet the facts of a disaster as of a political campaign must be told."

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF PRESENT TENDENCIES IN THE PRESS

The term "newspaper," in most cases, is used to refer to the metropolitan dailies exclusive of the small town papers, though they are of great importance. In order to form an opinion regarding the nature of the small-town paper, a statistical study was made of the Dec. 15 issues of twenty-four Missouri papers.

Those studied were: the Trenton Daily Republican, Columbia Daily Tribune, Columbia Missourian, Independence Examiner, Excelsior Springs Standard, Carthage Evening Press, Excelsior Springs News-Call, Trenton Times, Dunklin County News (Kennett), Southeast Missourian (Cape Girardeau), Carrollton Daily Democrat, St. Charles Daily Banner-News, Macon Republican, Pettis County Republican Sedalia), Butler Daily Democrat, Daily Republican (Popular Bluff), Daily St. Charles Cosmos-Monitor, Chillicothe Daily Tribune, Daily Argus (Brookfield), Kirksville Daily Express and News, Daily Democrat-News (Marshall), Interstate American (Poplar Bluff) Neosho Daily Democrat, and Daily Advertiser (Aurora).

The space in the newspapers devoted to the following topics was measured in inches: amusements, business, civic enterprise, crime, disaster, education, editorials, fiction, fine arts, foreign, historical, Klan, obituaries, political, religious radio, scandal, science, sports, social, squibs, women, weather, and miscellaneous matter.

Because of the brief that headlines play a great part not only in attracting the reader's attention but also in presenting to him news in brief, the headlines, together with the pictures which accompany the news stories, were included in the measurement. Even the cartoons were measured, for, while they are not in the strictest sense, news, they more nearly relate to news than to advertising. They reflect social interest as Prof. Garth would express it, and tend to indicate the reader's taste.

In the amusement class were listed stories of home-talent plays and of motion pictures, while in the fine arts were those stories of plays, concerts, recitals and other arts which were considered worthy of the designation, fine arts. Business included stories and market reports; disaster, stories of accidents, wrecks and fires involving great financial loss or loss of life; and civic enterprise, accounts of the city's and state's well-being, and of charity drives, benefits, gifts and other manifestations of benevolence.

Crime was used in the legal sense to include offenses against the individual, against property, and against public decency, public order and public justice. In some cases it was difficult to distinguish such types. An example of this is a law suit in which persons are trying to break a will. There is no indication of crime to be found. Such cases were listed under the heading, scandal, which also included divorce cases, church and political disputes and investigations of irregularities that have been rumored.

Education included stories of public schools, colleges, and universities; fiction, continued stories and short stories; and squibs, news of foreign and local affairs in a condensed form. All stories and cartoons which could not be classified under any one of the twenty-four headings were placed in the miscellaneous group.

Table I shows the percentages of material found in each of the classifications. In order of the amount of space, politics came first with 9.29 per cent,

then civic and benevolence had 9.22; social, 6.90; squibs, 6.00; business, 5.28; crime, 5.03; fiction, 4.70; education, 4.44; amusements, 3.53; foreign, 3.50; sports, 3.39; editorials, 3.19; religious, 2.53; weather, 2.19; women, 1.80; disaster, 1.78; obituaries, 1.23; science, .98; scandal, .85; radio, 85; historical, .80; klan, .57; fine arts, .34; and miscellaneous, the remaining 21.61.

The fact that crime was only 5.03 per cent might indicate one of two facts that not much crime had occurred, or that there was more interest in other subjects. The latter is a more logical explanation. There were the telegraphic

TABLE 1

News	City Dailies	Small-town Dailies	News	City Dailies	Small-town Dailies
	Dec. 15			Dec. 15	
Amusements	2.10	3.53	Obituaries	1.86	1.23
Business	17.99	5.28	Political	9.94	9.29
Disaster	1.15	1.78	Religious	1.11	2.53
Civic enterprise	4.72	9.22	Radio	1.89	.85
Crime	4.03	5.03	Scandal	1.58	.85
Education	1.68	4.44	Science	.78	.98
Editorials	2.73	3.19	Sports	12.62	3.39
Fiction	2.38	4.70	Social	3.19	6.90
Fine arts	.82	.34	Squibs	1.30	6.00
Foreign	3.09	3.50	Women	2.27	1.80
Historical	.70	.80	Weather	.85	2.19
Klan	.13	.57	Miscellaneous	21.09	21.61

Percentage of column inches given to news—including headlines and pictures—in the city newspapers for Dec. 15, 1925, and Jan. 15, 1926.

crime stories and a few stories of local sensations, yet these were overshadowed by stories of benevolence, which radiated Christmas spirit.

A more intensive study was made of the first page of these newspapers to find the prominence given to the different types of news. In the first place, the news was classified and percentages were found for each type, irrespective of the rest of the paper; second, the most prominent stories, i. e., those at the top of each column, were listed under their proper heading; and third, the headlines spread over more than one column were classified.

In the study of the first pages, the following data were found:

Subjects	Inches	Per Cent
Business	143	4.43
Crime	250	8.32
Civic	492	16.38
Disaster	65	2.16
Foreign	96	3.19
Obituaries	90	2.99
Political	315	10.48
Scandal	70	2.33
Squibs	54	1.46
Weather	134	4.46

The first stories at the top of each column, numbering left to right, in the twenty-four issues were:

Subjects	Times Each Subject Was Found							
Business	2	2	3	1	3	3	2	1
Crime	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2
Amusements				1	1	1		
Civic	6	4	8	5	3	3	3	1
Disaster		1	1	1	1		1	
Foreign		1	1					
Editorials	2		1	2	1	1		
Obituaries	1	3			1	1		
Political	4		4	4	5	3	2	3
Scandal	1	1		3	2	1	2	
Social	1	1		1	1	1		
Sports	1	1		1		3	4	
Squibs	3	2		2				
Weather	1	1	3		1	1	1	
Klan		2			1			
Personals		1						
Radio		1						
Religion			1					
Fine Arts		1						
Historical					1		1	

Civic news appeared at the top 33 times, political 25, business 17, crime 17, and scandal 10. The small-town newspaper is usually owned by local business men, and is published, sold and read in the same locality. One of its chief functions is that of promoting civic improvements either through its editorials or its news stories.

The account of the murder of "Battling" Siki was found most frequently in news of crime. The length of the accounts varied from two inches to one-half column.

One cannot determine definitely the character of the Missouri press by the results of the study of some of its representative papers for a day, yet the fact that crime occupied so small a percentage of the space would indicate that crime news was not of great consequence, at least during the pre-Christmas period in which charity and other civic matters clamored with politics for first place.

Since there was only 5.03 per cent of the entire space given to crime and 8.33 of the first page given it, one can see that crime news occupies a prominent position. Only two classes of news had greater prominence—civic enterprise and political news.

Crime reported was, for the most part, told in direct, concise form and unnecessary details were omitted. Three stories which show a way in which the newspaper may render service in printing crime news are illustrative of others that were found. One concerning the Perry parole is of importance in that it shows that officials are investigating the parole situation, that they are striving to check an overworked practice of granting paroles. The second story

regarding Ira Perry shows the attitude of the public toward the misuse of the practice.

The story of the successful attempt to keep J. J. Starling, a "dangerous" and "habitual" criminal, in the penitentiary, in spite of his good record while in prison, is a type of crime story which is commendable.

Such stories as this cause the public to have confidence in its officials who, considering the welfare of society, endeavor to keep the criminals where they cannot carry on their antisocial activities.

Although it is impossible to say that in the small-town newspapers throughout the United States, the same crime news situation would be found, one can say that Missouri is a fairly representative state and the newspapers elsewhere would have much the same characteristics.

In summary, crime in the small-town newspapers of this state is not of primary or even secondary interest. The editor, perhaps better than anyone else, knows his public, and, in the newspaper he will supply the demand for the kind of news that this public wants. This seems chiefly to be of a political and civic nature. Most of the crime stories are telegraphic and are cut down until one rarely occupies more than a half-column at most.

The problem of sensationalism is not found to any extent in the small-town paper. Crimes and sensations are less prevalent in the communities in which they are published. Sensational news in the metropolitan dailies may be likened to "backyard gossip"—more often passed about by word of mouth than by the printed word—in these smaller social groups.

A study was next made of a group of city newspapers for Dec. 15 and Jan. 15. The first part of this study was of a general nature. An attempt was made to find the percentage of space given to each type of material found to be of social interest and a comparison was made of the city and small-town newspapers for the same date.

In choosing the newspapers for the study, certain ones representing some of the outstanding characteristics of the press were selected. With the exception of black and white, most of the chromatic shades are to be found among the number.

These newspapers are practically all from the eastern half of the United States, the Denver Post being the only western paper of which two issues were studied. A reason for this selection is that journalism in that half of the country is older than in the other, and the newspapers have greater circulation.

While the Denver Post may not be representative of western journalism, it is one of the most widely read newspapers west of Chicago. One copy of the Morning Oregonian was also studied. It closely resembled newspapers of the same size from the South.

The papers of which copies for Dec. 15 and Jan. 15 were analyzed were: the Washington Post, Tulsa World, News and Observer (Raleigh,.. N. C.), Public Ledger and North America (Philadelphia), Morning World-Herald (Omaha), Commercial Appeal (Memphis, Tenn.), New York Herald-Tribune, New York American, Minneapolis Daily Star, Courier-Journal (Louisville, Ky.), Milwaukee Journal, Nebraska State Journal (Lincoln), Indianapolis Star, Denver Post, State (Columbia, S. C.), Atlanta Constitution, Sun (Baltimore), Chicago Daily News, Chicago Tribune, Cleveland Press, Dallas Morning News, New Orleans Item, Detroit News, and Boston Evening Transcript.

The newspapers of which only one issue was studied were: the Des Moines Register, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Florida Times Union (Jacksonville), Kansas City Kansan, Morning Oregonian (Portland) and the Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

Table I shows the percentages of space given to the different classifications of the city and small-town papers for Dec. 15. In view of the fact that the general study of the small-town dailies had 5.03 per cent of their space given to crime news, while the city dailies had only 4.03 per cent it would seem that the small-town papers have in comparison a greater amount of space devoted to crime. This is not the fact, however, for the vast amount of business, politics, pictures, sports and other materials, increase the total amount of space, and, consequently, decrease the percentage given to any one class.

Table II shows the percentages of the types of news for papers of Dec. 15 and Jan. 15. From these figures one can see the great amount of fluctuation in the amount of space occupied by the types of news.

TABLE II

News	Dec. 15,1925	Jan. 15,1926	News	Dec. 15,1925	Jan. 15,1926
	City Dailies			City Dailies	
Amusements	2.10	1.23	Obituaries	1.86	1.26
Business	17.99	17.71	Political	9.94	7.93
Disaster	1.15	2.52	Religious	1.11	.89
Civic enterprise	4.72	4.97	Radio	1.89	3.15
Crime	4.03	3.49	Scandal	1.58	1.65
Education	1.68	2.17	Science	.78	1.25
Editorials	2.73	2.52	Sports	12.62	12.54
Fiction	2.38	1.73	Social	3.19	4.06
Fine arts	.82	1.37	Squibs	1.30	1.15
Foreign	3.09	3.27	Women	2.27	2.49
Historical	.70	.70	Weather	.85	.47
Klan	.13	1.41	Miscellaneous	21.09	20.07

Classification of news—including headlines and pictures—in 24 small towns and 28 city newspapers, measured in percentage of column inch space.

The least variable were: business, with a difference of .28 per cent, civic enterprise .25 per cent, women .22 per cent, editorials .21 per cent, foreign .18 per cent, historical 0, scandal .07 per cent, sports .08 per cent, and squibs .15 per cent. Business, editorials, women's interests, sports and squibs are departmentalized, i. e., they are to be found segregated almost completely into specific sections and little variation would be expected. Historical news had identical percentages which seemed unusual, as did the fact that there was so little range i n foreign and scandal news.

The greatest difference was found in political news where there was a variation of 2.01 per cent; next, disaster with 1.37 per cent; third, Klan with 1.28 per cent; and fourth, radio with 1.26 per cent. There was .54 per cent more crime in the December than in the January issues.

A study of the first page of the city dailies for Dec. 15 and Jan. 15, inclusive, showed the following percentages: political 28.05, crime 16.14, foreign

7.11, civic 6.47, scandal 4.55, business 3.87, disaster 3.24, squibs 2.65, weatheer 2.58 and obituaries 1.39. The remainder, 23.97 per cent, could not be classified under any one of these headings.

A tabulation of the stories at the top of each column of the first page of all the city daily issues studied, showed the following results:

Subjects	Times Each Subject Was Found							
Amusements								
Business	10	3	7	2	7	5	5	2
Civic	2	6	4	5	6	8	7	4
Crime	8	7	9	4	9	11	8	17
Disaster	1	3	3	3	5	6	8	4
Foreign		8	4	3	4	3	1	2
Education		1	2					
Obituaries	2	3	1	1	1		2	
Political	18	8	16	19	17	18	9	19
Scandal	3	5	2	3	1	1	7	7
Social		1			1	1	1	
Science		1	2	6	4		1	
Sports		2					1	
Squibs	9	2						
Weather		3		3	1	2	3	
Klan			1					
Religion		4		2	1		3	
Fine arts		1	1	1				
Historical			2					
Heroic		2	1	1				

The first page of the city newspapers for Dec. 15 contained 11 ribbon heads of which there were 5 political, 1 scandal, 4 crime and 1 heroism. There was a 7-column head devoted to crime. The two 5-column heads were political and foreign, while the only 4-column head was scandal.

The 3-column heads included 1 political, 1 crime, 1 scandal and the 2-column heads, 1 disaster, 4 political, 2 science, 2 foreign, 7 civic, 1 scandal, 3 crime, 1 heroism and 1 unclassified (a story of John D. Rochefeller's grandson who is working his way through college).

The ribbon dealing with scandal was "SALM BABY SAVED FROM KIDNAPERS" (New York American). The boldfaced type was followed by three decks, which covered four column inches; the account from which the ribbon and the first of the three decks was taken occupied only 2.5 column inches. The following 5.5 inches of the story told of the latest developments in the separation suit of Count Salm against his wife, Countess Millicent Rogers Salm.

In the Minneapolis Daily Star was a ribbon head, "BOY SLAIN; SUSPEND COPS," to a story in which was told how a 14-year-old boy had been the innocent victim of a duel between the police and bandits. There were 83 inches of space given to the tragedy, while the story occupied only 27 of this total. Pictures and captions covered 20 inches. Only 12 inches were devoted to the activities of the bandits and their robbery of $75.00 from a cash register

in a Minneapolis market, while the remainder of the space was given to the accidental shooting.

Another ribbon head was "BOY 16, IN TRAP AS SLAYER OF THREE" over a 7-inch story telling of a youthful woodsman sought for killing a trader, a woman and a child in Arkansas. The story of the murder was told in a sentence only. "The three were killed yesterday, the woman by bullets from a .38 caliber pistol and a club, the child by crushing blows on the head and the man also by pistol balls."

A ribbon in the Milwaukee Journal tells that the "BATTLING SIKI IS FOUND MURDERED." The headlines, picture and story covered 38 inches of space. The story of the crime was given in the first six inches of space, while the rest of the space was given to his escapades and a resume of his professional boxing career.

"RINKER SAYS MURDER CHARGE WILL BE FILED AGAINST MRS. OLSON AT GREELEY," was a ribbon head found in two lines of red type across the top of the Denver Post. The story told of an announcement made by the chief of police that the charge of murder was to be placed and that Mrs. Olson's matrimonial records were being investigated.

On the first pages of the papers for Jan. 15 there were 2 ribbon headings about scandal, 1 crime, 1 politics, 1 disaster and 1 civic. Of the 7-column heads, 2 were given to disaster; of the 6-column, 1 to politics; of the 4-column, 2 to politics, 1 to disaster and 1 to foreign; and of the 2-column, 3 to disaster, 3 to politics, 2 to business, 2 to civic, 1 to science, 1 to religious scandal, 1 to liquor scandal and 1 to society romance.

The ribbons dealing with scandal were found in the New York American and Denver Post. The former was "WEDDING TO HARRIMAN OFF, GIRL SAILS." The story told of the recall of the invitations to the wedding of a Philadelphia society girl. The latter was "R. R. HALL 'TOLD' ON SOCIETY BOOTLEGGER—CLINE CHARGES AUTO MAN MADE DEAL WITH POLICE."

The crime head was: "WIFE CONFESSES MURDER OF PASTOR" (New Orleans Item.) The story was of a poison murder case in Ohio, in which a bride of two weeks was charged with the murder of her fifth husband. The story was told in five paragraphs.

Another ribbon head, from the Chicago Daily News, is of interest to this study, although it falls under the heading of civic. It is: "SEEK LEADER TO RID CHICAGO OF CRIME." It was told in the story that $500,000 was to be used to finance the activities of an anti-crime, anti-vice, and anti-graft organization backing the enterprise. The story covered 38 inches of space, and was given the most prominent place, the right-hand column. It told of plans that were being made, and of the commercial, civic and social organizations co-operating in the work.

Only one significant paragraph needs to be quoted:

> "In reviewing the accomplishments of the commission during the last seven years, Col. Henry Barrett Chamberlin, operating director, ascribed the nationwide interest in the campaign for law enforcement and the reduction of crime to the creation of a public opinion in Chicago by the Chicago Crime Commission."

The Chicago papers played a great part in the creation of this public opinion, and a reflection of the same principles is found in the other newspapers of the country.

A fault often attributed to the press is that it presents accounts of crimes, but does not give the same prominence to their punishment. That this does not hold true may be illustrated by the emphasis given to the Chapman case on the first pages of the issues for Dec. 15.

A total of 136 column inches of front-page space alone was given. The Atlantic Constitution had a 7-column head: "GERALD CHAPMAN DENIED HABEAS CORPUS WRIT:" The Denver Post had a 2-line, 3-column head telling in red ink that "FEDERAL JUDGE DENIES CHAPMAN PLEA AND ORDERS HE MUST HANG." There were four 2-column heads and eight stories having two or more decks in one column.

The following headlines illustrate the way in which these headlines told of the punishment to be given Chapman:

"JUDGE DENIES CHAPMAN PLEA" (Indianapolis Star)

"CHAPMAN NEAR NOOSE AS COURT DENIES PLEA" (Courier-Journal)

"CHAPMAN LOSES WRIT FIGHT TO SERVE TERM; MUST HANG" (New York American)

"CHAPMAN BLOCKED IN COURT FIGHT TO MAKE U. S. CUT HANGING ROPE" (New York Herald-Tribune)

"CHAPMAN LOSES ANOTHER ROUND IN LIFE BATTLE" (Tulsa World)

"RETURN TO ATLANTA IS DENIED CHAPMAN" (The Sun)

Newspapers not having the Chapman story on the first page had stories corresponding in length, in less important positions on inside pages.

The question of the newspaper and crime is not confied to the amount of space given to such stories, but perhaps even more to the position of stories of crimes and the way in which they are written. The newspapers for the two dates showed that stories of prevention and punishment were as conspicuous as stories telling of crimes having been committed.

Among the stories of punishment found on the first pages of the issues for Jan. 15 alone were that of: (1) the hanging of Owen Baker and Harry Sowash for a murder in Vancouver, B. C.; (2) the electrocution of a 17-year-old Cleveland boy for killing a man during a holdup of his store; (3) the execution of Anthony Pantano in Albany, N. Y., for the murder of two Brooklyn messengers; (4) the execution of Ralph Seyboldt, Defiance, Ohio, for the murder of a patrolman; and (5) the sentence of fifty years in the state penitentiary for Edward Flickinger who pleaded guiltv to a murder in Cherokee, Ia.

CHAPTER V

PUBLIC OPINION

In a study of the newspaper, public opinion should be given a prominent place. Although the newspaper is said to mold opinion, the reverseis also true—that the public often determines much of the policy of the paper. After all, a newspaper is a commodity which will be bought if it pleases the reader, if it does not it will be cast aside.

Public opinion in regard to crime news is of two types: (1) in favor and (2) against. Many of the advocates seem unmindful of the dangers of such publicity, while the opposers do not realize its possibilities for good. In order to show the nature of the arguments made, some of the outstanding ones will be given.

One of the advocates for the publication of crime news is James Melvin Lee, director of the Department of Journalism in New York University. He says that there are three tests for news: (1) "Is it true? (2) Is it kind? (3) If unkind, is it necessary to print it for the public good?"

Having heard a clergyman criticise newspapers for featuring on the first page a minister who had gone wrong and a Sunday school superintendent who embezzled, Dr. Lee said:

> "I hope never to see the time when a minister or a Sunday school superintendent does not get Page 1. The more space that is given to an erring minister the finer the tribute to the clergy as a whole."

He told, in an address before the Young People's Society of the Park Avenue Baptist Church in New York, of his poll of the clergy in his quest for "a statement of specific rules that might help the copy desk to decide what was 'fit to print.' "

> "Every city editor would prefer to send his men out to hunt for the good things of life if only the reading public has as much interest in such accounts as they have in crime. Newspapers may need reform, but newspaper readers need it still more."

He made a canvass of readers on a Long Island Railroad train from Montauk Point. Every newspaper reader he counted, including "a great banker who got on at Southampton, several high dignitaries of the church who had preached the Sunday before at the summer resorts, several important book publishers and so on down the line" were all absorbed in a front-page murder story.

In answer to two widely made charges against the press—that of control by great financial interests and too much sensationalism in the Stillman case, Dr. Lee said that the latter proved the absolute recklessness of the statements about interests controlling the press.

He pointed out that men of influence and prominence, instead of being able to suppress or soften unfavorable publicity, were more likely to receive unfavorable publicity in greater measure by very reason of their prominence and influence.

Dr. Lee advocates the publication of complete news of crimes. He said in an address on "Newspaper Readers and Crime News" that prison officials maintain that the printing of crime news increases the amount of crime, but "papers are not published for criminals." In answer to the statement of educators that the wrong example is placed before the school children, he said

that "newspapers are not published for children." These two groups constitute a comparatively small portion of the reading public.

Many of his newspaper friends, he says, maintain that the success of the Christian Science Monitor was not caused by the fact that it omitted news of crimes. According to his "slight checking up" it was shown that the people who buy the Monitor know as much about crime as those who buy other papers He also says:

> "We may not like the use of display headlines in the newspapers, but we are not in a position to say that the papers that use them are not accomplishing as much good as the conservative papers. Ethics for papers as with men, is largely a personal matter. The newspaper should have the instincts of a gentleman. Gentlemen are not exempt from wrong-doing, but they are always ready to make amends when they discover that they have done wrong."

In regard to the influence of news of crime and vice on the young, Casper S. Yost, editor of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat and president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, is of the following opinion:

> "That there is wrong in the world every child discovers very early in life. The attempt to conceal from youth the existence of evil has never succeeded. On the contrary, the effort invariably throws a glamor over evil and arouses a curiosity to know more about it. Somehow, sometime, somewhere, youth learns the nature and extent of evil, and this in some measure it must learn before it is fully equipped for the battle of life. The inportant thing is that it be taught to distinguish right from wrong, and to realize clearly that right is ever good and that evil, however garbed, is always bad, and always destructive.
>
> "It is true that the publication of crime acts now and then upon the instincts of imitation, but this occurs as a rule only when there is lack of that knowledge, or where there is evil association or inherent disposition in the direction of wrong; and given any one of such conditions criminality is likely to result regardless of publication. As a general proposition neither youth nor maturity would profit by the elimination of legitimate news of crime and vice from the press, while the public would be deprived of information that it needs for self-protection."

Mr. Yost believes that it is a public duty to print news of crime and vice, constituting problems with which society must perpetually deal. If it is to cope with these effectively, it must know of their nature, extent and the forces and influences behind them.

> "Public opinion is as important a factor in the prevention, suppression or punishment of crime as in any other field of human activity, but it is never exercised in any field until it is aroused by public events. Crime and vice are menaces to society, and as such must be continuously and actively opposed by the agencies which society creates for its protection. But in the protection of society, the law, the courts and the police must have the public support which can only come from a measure of acquaintance with the facts and conditions with which they have to deal. If the news of this character were suppressed the people would be deprived of the only general and constant source of knowledge as to such events."

News that is of no consequence from the standpoint of public welfare and that appeals only to a base curiosity has no justification, according to Mr. Yost. Since much of the value and influence of the newspaper depends upon the domestic confidence it inspires, it must be clean in speech and in spirit. The events of the day, many of which may be ugly, can be reported in clean words.

> "The service of journalism in the publication of news of crime and vice is to reveal them in their ugliness, to show their magnitude and their danger, and this is a real and a necessary service. Upon journalism, however, rests the responsibility of discriminating between what is of service and what is not, between what is of proper public interest and what is a mere response to lewd curiosity, in short, between what is fit to print and what is not fit to print, judged by its own standards of fitness."[1]

Nelson A. Crawford, head of the Department of Journalism, Kansas State Agricultural College, answers a popular argument for suppression of news of crime and vice—that such publication destroys the reputation of the town outside and stirs up ill feeling in the town itself.

> "The same argument would, if carried to a logical conclusion, prevent a clergyman from preaching against evil and even a court from punishing it. It is based, consciously or unconsciously, on the doctrine that whatever is concealed can do no harm. It is, moreover, the argument regularly advanced by the friends and supporters of professional gamblers, thugs and other criminals in endeavoring to prevent a city from being cleaned up. Newspapers which adopt this reasoning are merely playing into the hands of criminal and degenerate elements of the public.
>
> "As Mr. White (William Allen White) points out, news of crime or misdemeanor is a public matter and publicity is a deterrent to evil-doing. Furthermore, particularly in the small town publicity affords a measure of protection to the evil-doer himself against exaggeration of the evil that he has committed. If the facts are left unpublished, town gossip will exaggerate them out of all proportion to their actual state. The publication of the exact facts enables the public to obtain a correct understanding and to draw fair conclusions from it."[7]

Mr. White is quoted by Mr. Crawford as having said:

> "The man who fills up with whisky and goes about making a fool of himself, becomes a public nuisance. If permitted to continue it, he becomes a public charge. The public has an interest in him. Publicity is one of the things that keeps him straight. His first offense is ignored in the Gazette, but his second offense is recorded when when he is arrested, and no matter how high or how low he is, his name goes in. We have printed this warning to drinkers time and again; so when they come around asking us to think of their wives and children, or their sick mothers or poor old fathers, we always we tell them to remember that they had fair warning, and if their fathers and mothers and wives and children are nothing to them before taking, they are nothing to us after taking."

Victor Rosewater who was for many years editor of the Omaha Bee discusses the relation of publicity to law-breaking in the following words:

> "The true portrayal of crime and vice is repellent and preventive in its influence, for the story is always a tragedy. Realization that the risks outweigh the gains, the certainty of a bad ending, above all, the fear of exposure to the world in the press, operate to keep the weak and the wicked straight. Pitiless publicity is powerful not alone with corporate wrong doers and malefactors of great wealth. The police ferret out criminals, the law officers prosecute, the courts pronounce the penalties, the prison-keepers mete out punishment—the over-hanging sword of publicity cools that criminal impulse and prevents crime."

Melville E. Stone answers the question whether or not criminal matters ever should be narrated at any length in the papers in this way:

> "It is not enough to say, of course, that the paper that barred all crimes from its columns would soon lose many readers. That is a truth irrelevant to any moral controversy. But keeping crimes out of the papers certainly would not stop the commission of crimes, while, also certainly, it would create a false sense of security for the virtuous public and a real one for the criminals.
>
> "As a matter of fact, papers of the better sort give but a minute fraction of their space to crimes and a still smaller one to divorce suits. That is because only a few crimes and a few divorce suits are of general or legitimate interest. But some of them are both. Discrimination is not always easy, nor is it always accurate, but the press as a whole selects decently and well, and it has a right to protest against criticism undeserved by the majority of its representatives."

Further, Mr. Stone says that all the fine theories would be of little avail unless the newspaper could compel attention of the public. Speaking for newspaper men, he says:

> "We set out to command success as well as to deserve it. We made the paper sensational. Not—in the ordinarily accepted significance of that much-abused word. Not by parading the noisome details of commonplace crime, nor the silly so-called 'human interest stories' of cats born with two heads, or like babble having no real value and only presented for the purpose of pandering to the prurient taste of the groundlings.
>
> "It is easy to edit a newspaper if one does no thinking, has no initiative capacity. He then labels all murders and suicides and hangings and prize fights and chicken fights as news and his task is a simple one. These are the editors who, like the three Japanese monkeys, never see, hear, or tell us anything. But the field of human activity is quite large enough for better work—work which will give an individual character to the paper, wake an echo, and conduce to betterment of the readers."

Charles E. Grinnell, writing of "Modern Murder Trials and the Newspaper," points out that the ambition of the reporter is to unearth more facts than the police.

> "The reporter has to endure the traditional fate of the bearer of bad news. A heavy load of moral responsibility is upon him when he does detective work and makes reports before trial concerning

> persons charged with crime. Sometimes, when he tells too much or falls into libel, it is a reproach which he shares with the police and in some instances the work is a public benefit which he and the police perform with industry and courage without thanks. It is to the credit of the Boston Herald, its reporter and the other gentlemen who acted, that, in consequence with their investigation, Cromwell and Stain, after conviction of murder and eleven years imprisonment in Maine, were found not guilty."

Mr. Grinnell says that newspapers are giving less space to crime than they did a few years ago. The reason for this change, he believes, is probably not that the taste of the majority has improved, but that its interest has shrifted for the moment to scandals.

> "Such changes tend to modify the theory that reports of criminal cases usually cause a morbid interest in crime. The public mind seems to be pretty healthy in that it does not dwell permanently upon any one evil, but samples them all in turn, with a cheerful belief that some persons are deterred from crime by a fear of exposure by the vigilant press.
>
> "The test is: how much does the majority want? The tests of what shall be told and how plainly it shall be put, are the standards commonly observed as to what can be said aloud to a roomful of grown persons who really wish to know what has happened. Variable as many of these standards, the regard paid to them, such a they are, affects the circulation of every newspaper. Some men will not take home a paper which is habitually scandalous."

Walter Lippman, in an address before the Chamber of Commerce in New York in 1923, said that it is the duty of the modern newspaper to print crime news as well as all other kinds of news. "Crime news is a part of the picture of life as it is. The danger is not so much in publishing crime news as it is in the newspaper turning detective, prosecutor and judge."

Sir Robert Peacook, chief constable of Manchester, made the following statement at an International Police Conference in New York:

> "While it may not be desirable in certain cases to circulate information regarding crimes and persons wanted, it has been found beneficial in many instances, and valuable assistance has been rendered to the police by the publication in the press of the details of crimes and persons wanted in connection therewith."

The following ideas are expressed in an editorial in the Nation:

> "Unfortunately crime has been, is and probably long will be one of the great sordid unescapable facts in the intensely interesting labatory called the world. Any reform must be preceded by a knowledge of the facts. An understanding of crime, a study of the motives and passions which direct men, is essential to anyone who would know his fellows or work for their betterment.
>
> "Crime is news. It is one of those unusual and abnormal aspects of life in which people generally are interested. The very fact that it is unusual and abnormal is evidence that the vast majority is law-abiding and socially minded. . . . Without doubt many persons get suggestions for crime from the newspapers; without doubt, also, many are deterred from crime through learning in the newspapers of its

> frequent failure, peril and punishment. . . . When we achieve the perfect world we shall banish crime from our newspapers. But by then we shall be ready to banish the newspaper also."

N. J. Radder, associate professor of Journalism, Indiana University, in an article on "Newspaper Makeup and Headlines", says:

> "Newspapers are subject to a constant fire of criticism for the publicity they give to crime. Some of the criticism is justified, other is not. It is the duty of the newspaper to give the community in which it is published a complete picture of itself. To exclude crime news would be to distort the picture. It would deceive people into believing society is really better that it is."

The New York Times, although not of a sensational nature, has been one one of the leading newspapers supporting crime publicity through its editorials. The two following paragraphs, extracted from a Times editorial, show the opinion of the paper in regard to elimination of crime news:

> "This view usually is maintained by people who know nothing about the newspaper business or of the obligations that rest upon the press. They probably are right as to the possibility that the possessors of weak minds sometimes are moved by the reading of murder stories and the like to acts of which otherwise they would not be guilty, but the form of suggestion thus received is only one of many, and far more than balancing it, in all probability, is the deterrent effect exercised by the fear of publicity for evil-doing.
>
> "There are, of course, different ways of presenting crimes to the reading public, and as no two newspapers are alike it is absurdly wrong to speak of the worst methods of dealing with crime from the news standpoint as if that were the only one. There is such a thing as "the press" but there is no characterization, favorable or unfavorable, that fits the whole of it, and wholesale denunciation therefore always is calumny. People have a right to know what happens in the world. No to know, that is the most dangerous form of ignoance. They need to know the world as it is, in addition to knowing what it ought to be in the opinion of the judges more or less competent."

Again, in answer to a proposal of the Chicago Bar Association to prohibit through law the taking of photographs in courtrooms while trials are in progress, the Times says that such matters should be left where they belong—with the judges. "They have full power to protect their own dignity and if they do not they are more to blame than 'the press' if the latter turns license into abuse."

The view is given, on the part of the association, that court proceedings should "not be presented as a sort of theatrical entertainment with all attention fixed on the sensational and bizarre incidents." To this the Times answers:

> "Whatever of such bad reporting exists should be condemned, but the implied censorship is unwarranted. The Chicago lawyers are free as is everybody eles to read only the papers whose methods of reporting, present of criminal trials and of everything else a true instead of a false picture. That is the best of all censorships "

At a meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in January, 1925, the discussion of the deletion and suppression of crime news arose, but

was declared unsound on the basis that "expression can never be so bad for the group as suppression."

Casper S. Yost, president of the association, referred to the suggestion that the press might cooperate with the legal profession in the prevention of crime and said there was no more need for such cooperation between the press and the bar than there is for regulation of the practice of the bar, as there are abuses in both professions.

Lyman Abbott made the following significant comparison:

> "Despite the many and serious defects of the American press, it renders us one great service—it holds the mirror up to American life, and shows us what that life is. It does not always show it in the right proportions. The mirror is not always well-formed; it is sometimes like one of those convex or concave mirrors that stands in the agricultural fairs—that presents your face so out of proportion that you do not recognize yourself when you look in it. Nevertheless the press does bring American people to self-consciousness. If, when we look in the looking-glass, the face is dirty, it is the face we need to wash, not the looking-glass.... We do not want in America a press which only portrays our virtues and forgets our vices."

A most heated discussion against crime publicity is to be found in an article on "Lawlessness and the Press" in The Century.

> "Stodgy crimes like the ordinary killings and poisonings, 'black-hand' stealings and explosions, strike outrages, public defalcations and plain burglaries are set forth with an exhaustiveness alike stimulating to those inclined to follow criminal example and terrifying to those fearful of becoming future victims. It is plain that the average sensational editor handles a topic of that sort with a determination to surpass his rivals 'duty to publicity' by making the most of its possibililities as salable news. No matter if premature publicity will baffle so-called 'justice'; the public shall know all of the hideous reality, and more than all of the imaginary direfulness, even if civilization must thereby perish lingeringly on the altar of journalistic commerce.

Former Vice-President Thomas R. Marshall has made the following statement:

> "Is there news in every petty murmur, in every slimy divorce suit? Is there news in every little irritant in every community? I think the real news for the American people that every reporter, every member of the Associated Press and every newspaper should publish is the sounding of a clarion call for every man to stand by the constitution and the maintenance of the principles upon which the Republic was founded."[4]

Commissioner Enright in his annual report for 1919 said that "scare headlines and exaggerated stories of crime and lawlessness serve to adver-

4. "An important fact he (Mr. Marshall) overlooked is that not even the law itself is a more powerful deterrent of crime than the certainty of publicity for the criminal."—From a New York Times editorial.

tise the business of the criminal and to attract criminals from far and near who, because of newspaper stories, believed they could operate with impunity."[5]

John J. Murphy, for many years commissioner of the New York Tenement House Department, in a letter to the New York Times says:

> "I think you must admit that the papers in general, but the Times less than most, believe that scandals furnish the tenderest morsels for public consumption, and that there is more joy in laying before the readers one Sunday School superintendent or society woman who goes wrong than in telling the stories of a thousand virtuous plodders who won't take a chance."[6]

In an editorial in The Outlook the following idea is expressed:

> "Twice every day the sensational journal lifts the curtain on a stage thronged with actors engaged in their various roles. At one end of the stage a man in a mask is blowing open a safe, in the background an embezzling cashier is boarding a train for Mexico, in the middle stage two stalwart gentlemen are chloroforming a helpless old woman, to the left a youth is drowning a girl whom he has first dishonored; at the front, in the limelight, a drunken man is beating his wife's brains out with a boot jack. All this movement of life, so varied, so striking, so engrossing, can be seen for one cent."

The Cleveland Foundation of Criminal Justice, after a survey of the crime conditions in that city came to the conclusion that "crime wave" treatment by the newspaper was significant because of the quality of the news matter. The kind of news and the way it was treated greatly influenced the public mind and the public's attitude toward criminal justice.

> "An unusual amount of space and special headline emphasis are given to crimes indiscriminately, whether great or small. News treatment of such a period tends to create and sustain interest in the 'crime wave' as a daily feature or news 'serial'. There is little or no attempt to give dependable statistics of the actual increase in crime, and still less to analyze causes and underlying conditions."

Warren G. Harding, who was a newspaper man before he was a president, disapproved of sensational accounts. He was quoted by the Times as having said:

> "I believe if I were to write a code (a code prepared by the American Society of Newspaper Editors) I would ban everything of a vicious character except that which is necessary as public warning. If I ran a newspaper to suit my own ideals there would not be a police court reporter on the paper—never a police court column in the paper.

Professor Hugh Grant, head of the Department of Journalism at Auburn (Ala.) believes that "yellow" journalism and sensational revival services are

5. N. Y. Times satirical editorial retort: "It is the newspaper that insists on publishing accounts of crime. It is 'scare-headlines' that take the scare of the law out of the criminal, invite him to the city, set him at work. ... It is the fault of the newspapers that since Jan. 1 more than a hundred homicides have been committed in this town and the committers of them are at large, undetected, unknown."

6. N. Y. Times editorial answer: "That admission is promptly and cordially made, but if one of the virtuous plodders suddenly did something noble or heroic, his claim to the front page would be recognized gladly by any newspaper."

two contributing factors to many crimes in the United States. Of "yellow" journalism, he says:

> "It taints the columns of practically all of our important news, papers, and is directly responsible for much of the crime perpetrated through the psychological effect on the minds of degenerates of salcious news stories with which our modern newspapers are reeking."

Henry W. Taft of the Bar Association of New York City had a most interesting debate with Don C. Seitz, business manager of the World, on the subject of "Courts and the Press." Mr. Taft says that the newspapers create a presumption of guilt, in their trial by headlines and in sensational cases and that crimes tend to lose their ugliness through newspaper publication. He says:

> "All students of the subject assert that suggestion plays an important part in crime. Even persons of a higher moral responsibility find themselves interested in mysterious crimes as in a game. And with persons not endowed with much power of ethical discrimination, the taste for lurid fiction possesses them and their sense of right and wrong is obscured by their sympathies or by their effort to solve what is a seemingly insoluble mystery. Crime is not presented in a repulsive aspect. The inevitable tendency is to exalt the criminal, to cultivate the ignoble and to diminish the abhorrence of crime."

Further, Mr. Taft suggests that the newspapers employ lawyers and teach appreciation of the art of news values.

> "A thing that the newspapers do and ought to change, is to exploit guilty criminals. They are treated a great deal better than than eminent statesmen on eminent occasions. Their every gesture is exploited; what they had for breakfast, their previous history. Not many of them are subjected to that obscurity which the prison walls ought to impose, but there is a glorification of the criminal who has been a party to a successful and cruel crime. .....
>
> "Now there is a very legitimate interest in mysterious crimes. One would be quite unreasonable if he expected the newspapers to withhold from their readers fair accounts of the commission of crimes. Of course, we are all interested in it. But there must be a limit in order that these ulterior results may not flow, and particularly when those results come from inaccurate, overdrawn or over-colored accounts."

Mr. Seitz blamed the procrastination of courts, their reversal of one by-another, the eagerness of lawyers to smash the laws instead of defending them and the lack of interest on the part of the press in following cases through every twist and turn of the procedure labyrinth.

E. A. Ross discussed the responsibility of the newspaper in the creation of a "mob mind" in the following manner:

> "The crowd may be rushed headlong into folly or crime by irresponsible or accidental leaders. The public, on the other hand, can receive suggestions only through the columns of its journal. The editor is like the chairman of a mass meeting, for no one can be heard without his recognition. Since he is a man of some consequence, with a reputation to make or mar, the guidance he gives his readers will be on a level with the guidance which the experienced orator supplies to the crowd."

W. I. Thomas in his article on the Psychology of Yellow journalism" expresses more nearly than perhaps any other writer the view of many sociologists.

> "It (the yellow journal) is a positive agent of vice and crime. The condition of morality, as well as of mental life, in a community depends on the prevailing copies. A people is profoundly influenced by whatever is persistently brought to its attention. A good illustration of this is the fact that an article of commerce—a food, a luxury, a medicine, or a stimulant—can always be sold in immense quantities if it be persistently and largely advertised. In the same way the yellow journal by an advertisement of crime, vice and vulgarity, on a scale unexampled in commercial advertising and in a way that amounts to approval and even applause, becomes one of the forces making for immorality."

Perhaps the most intensive study of the question is that made by Frances Fenton Bernard, while candidate for the the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Chicago. Mrs. Benard's thesis, prepared in sociology, was published in 1911. Since that time there has been no other outstanding attempt at solving the problem from that standpoint, although William Healy, in writing of Mrs. Benard's thesis, does not seem to agree as to the validity of her conclusions.

He says that when it comes to anything like proof of the supposed effect in any given case, it is singularly hard to obtain. Further, he continues, "General impressions from many sources are readily forthcoming, but there is no satisfactory exact data, and yet, of course, this does not deny certain eminently bad influences which such literature may have."

In writing of the results of his own studies, Mr. Healy says:

> "In no one single case can we in the least show that the reading of newspapers was a strong cause of criminality. We have inquired about mental influences in many hundreds of cases, and while other factors stand out clearly as affecting mental processes, this does not. Nor do our results contradict anything that other authors have actually been able to show."

If one is to believe William Healy, who is considered an authority in his field, it would seem that the sociologist is no nearer a scientific basis for his assumption than he was before Mrs. Bernard's theses was written.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ARGUMENTS FAVORING PUBLICATION OF CRIME NEWS

1. The public needs information on vice and crime for self-regulation and self-protection.
2. Concealment arouses curiosity and throws a glamor over evil.
3. In regard to its effect upon children—they must be acquainted with good and evil before they are equipped for the battle of life.
4. Public opinion must be aroused througn the columns, to support its agencies for combating menaces to society.
5. Publication of news of crime shows its magnitude, danger and ugliness.
6. Crime increases in darkness, while reform can come only through knowledge of existing conditions.

7. Publicity is a deterrent to evil-doing since criminals dislike being "written up".

8. True presentation of crime is preventive, for the story is always a tragedy.

9. The public interest is healthy in that it does not dwell on one crime or scandal, but samples them all in turn.

10. Crime news is part of the picture of life—without it one would be led to believe that society is better than it is.

11. Such news often renders assistance to the police in helping them locate persons wanted for crimes.

12. Crime news is of the unusual and abnormal aspects of life in which people are interested. The fact that the vast majority is law-abiding and socially minded, is evidenced by the very fact that it is unusual and abnormal.

13. People have a right to know what happens in the world. Ugly facts can, however, be given in clean words.

14. Readers have the power to determine the type of news they read.

15. The newspaper serves as a mirror to reflect society's virtues and vices. It would not be a true reflection with out the latter.

16. If the public does not like the reflection, it should change conditions rather than criticize the press for reflecting evil.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ARGUMENTS OPPOSING PUBLICATION OF CRIME NEWS

1. Premature publicity often baffles the police in their efforts to find the criminals who is at large.

2. Crime news serves to advertise the business and attract the criminal to localities in which he believes he work without a great risk of being detected.

3. Scandal is believed by editors to be a tender morsel for public consumption.

4. Crimes are presented indiscriminately without trying to analyze causes or underlying conditions.

5. In times of "crime waves" the newspapers make such news a daily feature or daily serial without attempt to give dependable statistics.

6. Through suggestion, the newspaper is directly responsible for much of the perpetration of crime.

7. Papers create a presumption of guilt, and frequently there is found trial by headline.

8. The tendency is to exalt the criminal and to make him appear as a hero.

9. Crimes tend to lose their ugliness through publication.

10. Too much space and prominence is given to reports of crime and scandal.

11. Such news crowds out material of greater importance.

12. The appeal is to the base instincts of the public.

13. Lessons in crime are given through crime stories.

14. Crime stories present a bad influence over children.

CHAPTER VI

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Criticism always has been and perhaps always will be of great value to social institutions. It is needed for pointing out defects to which the members of the various institutions are blinded by reason of the fact that they cannot see themselves from the outsider's view point.

Destructive criticism is never justifiable; it tneds to tear down rather than to build. Fortunately, most criticism of the press is constructive in that it practically always is followed by suggestions for imporvement. Many of these suggestions are impractical, yet others are of such a nature that they are valuable to the newspaper.

Some of the suggestions most frequently made will be discussed irrespective of their worth and an attempt will be made to analyze them. They will fall under three headings: (1) improvement of the news paper; (2) reform in legal procedure; and (3) change in public opinion.

A most acceptable proposal is that made by Dr. A. Edwin Keigwin, pastor of the West End Presbyterian Church, New York. The newspapers, he says, should "write down" not "write up" crime stories and have the policeman, rather than the criminal, the hero.

This part of his proposal is carried out by many newspaper editors when the situation is such that it can be done, while it is doubtful that any newspaper either consciously or unconsciously makes of the criminal a hero. Dr. Keigwin believes that:

> "If the names of the criminals could be omitted or branded, and the names of the officers of the law could be magnified, might not have a salutary effect upon the susceptible emotional centers of the criminal? The hero in each story should be the courageous officer who made the arrest. The press should voice society's praise of those public officials responsible for the enforcement of the law."

While many newspapers now, to some extent, "play up" in the headlines and leads those who have captured the criminal or have blocked his attempt to commit a crime, it is unlikely that the latter part of Dr. Keigwin's suggestion would ever meet with approval. The branding or omitting of the criminal's name could never be made a policy of the press so long as there is the prevalent belief that "the wages of sin is publicity."

An opposing view, advanced by Dr. Keigwin and other critics is that the hardened criminals crave publicity—that they revel in notoriety. Which of these views is correct is a matter of opinion, for neither statement has been definitely proved.

After consulting a large number of newspaper men, Barratt O'Hara, lieutenant-governor of Illinois, drafted a bill to license newspaper men, as members of the profession of journalism, in much the same manner as lawyers and doctors are. This bill provided for the creation of a state board of journalism which should both issue and revoke licenses to practice this profession.

According to Mr. O'Hara's bill, a license should be issued when the applicant had: (1) reached legal age: (2) completed the equivalent of a high school education; (3) studied two years in a recognized college of journalism, or passed the same period of time in a newspaper office as an apprentice reporter; (4) furnished the board with positive proof of good moral character; and

(5) passed an examination in writing, conducted by the state board of journalism at regular intervals.

A license should be revoked automatically on the practitioner's conviction of a felony, or after due filing of charges and trial by jury of his fellow practitioners, for willful misrepresentation, malicious writing of scandal, acceptance of money or other prize tendered as a bribe for the deliberate and unjustified coloring of news items, or other conduct unprofessional, reprehensible and dishonest.

This proposal has aroused a great amount of discussion. Although it seems to be based upon a sound principle, that of raising the standards of the profession, it has met with extreme opposition. Criticism of the proposal is based on the age-old struggle of the press against legislation.

An English substitute for the license plan is explained by Percy S. Bullen of the London Telegraph. An organization, known as the Institute of Journalists of Great Britain, has been formed in Great Britain on the same theory as medical councils and law societies. It began as the National Association of Journalists among the young journalists of Lancashire and the North and Midlands of England.

It maintains an unemployment, defense, orphan and provident fund besides its employment register. A subscription of $6.00 a year covers all of these benefits.

On July 6, 1915, William Jennings Bryan gave an address before the International Press Congress, in which he recommended the signing of editorials and news reports. This, he believed, would contribute both to accuracy and to the reputation of the writers. He thought that an injustice in the present system is that the men who furnish the literary ability—the editorial writers and news correspondents—often live in obsciruty, "while the corporations from which they draw pay, reap an unfair profit from their genius."

An editorial in the New York Times explains in what way Mr. Bryan's suggestion is impossible. In the complex modern system it would be inconceivable to give credit to each person through whose hands a single story passes. For instance, in a fire story the reporter covering the fire, telephones the story to the office where it is rewritten, perhaps, by another reporter. Then the rewrite man and copy reader in turn arrange the story, write the heads, correct the mistakes and prepare it for the press. Credit could not be given to any one of these persons, when each of them has a share in the finished story.

A suggestion of internal censorship, advanced by Thomas A. Lahey of the Commerce faculty of the University of Notre Dame, is one which has met with more approval.

Mr. Lahey says that external censorship which has often been threatened would be a great handicap to the real purpose of the press. Editors and owners should realize this and have voluntary censorship of their own columns "by the guiding principles of the moral law."

> "It is a poor excuse for journalists to talk or write about the difficulties of such internal censorship. They continually exercise the same censorship very easily and very effectively over matter submitted to their advertising columns.
>
> "Neither is the fact that newspapers must narrate delicate matter any excuse for injuring the tender souls of readers. The same necessity confronts doctors and preachers and the more representa-

tive newspapers. They present such matter in an inoffensive and harmless way.

"As one observer puts it. 'All news is fit to print, if it is told aright'. There is only one rule for the journalist where scandalous matter is conceened: he has no more privileges than the private person, and the private person has none."

Theoretically, any censorship, either external or internal, would be contrary to the ideals of the freedom of the press and the theory that the public is entitled to know what happens in the world. Yet, there is a certain amount of internal censorship continually exercised—for instance, the fact that some newspapers do not give names of poisons used in suicide.

As each man is a censor of his own speech and conduct, so is the newspaper. As one of the newspaper critics has said: ugly facts may be told in clean words. If this is censorship, the public and the newspaper men should support such a suggestion.

A radical proposal is made by Upton Sinclair in his *Brass Check*. He says that pamphleteering, a return to a custom in the eighteenth century of printing and circulating large numbers of leaflets, pamphlets and books, could only be a temporary solution to the "needed change in the newspaper."

His first recommendation is that there be a law which should: (1) require an o. k. on interviews before they are printed; and (2) that false statements concerning individuals be corrected in the next edition and in the "same sport" with the same prominence as was given to the false statement.

Mr. Sinclair advocates state or municipal-owned newspapers. He proposed that a weekly publication, "The National News," be founded and endowed. "This publication will carry no advertisements and no editorials. It will not be a journal of opinion, but a record of events pure and simple." Of its purpose, he says: "(1) It will be strictly nonpartisan and never the propaganda organ of any cause; (2) its job will be to nail the lies and bring the truth into the light of day; (3) it will watch the country and see where lies are being circulated and news suppressed."

Since Mr. Sinclair's proposal carried the remedy outside the field of the newspaper, for which he offers a substitute, it cannot be further considered in the light of this discussion. His ideas, however, do not seem to be representative of the opinion of the average newspaper critic.

In 1920, Assemblyman Bret Lord introduced a bill into the New York Legislature. The text of the bill relates to the publication of homicides and homicide trials. It is as follows:

"Section 1. The penal law is hereby amended by inserting therein a new article to be Article 147, to read as follows:

"Section 1525. Publication of homicided and homicids trials.

"It shall be unlawful for any newspaper or other medium through which news or events of the day are publicly disseminated to publish or report the happenings or details of any homicide or the proceedings of any homicide trial in any article or writing containing a caption, heading or headline in type larger than 36 point or in width extending over more than one column.

"Any corporation violating the provisions of this section shall be liable to the fine of not more than $1,000 and every officer, editor

or reporter of such corporation, newspaper or medium or other person who shall assist in doing the acts prohibited by this section is guilty of a misdeameanor.

"Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately."[7]

Mr. Lord said that he was impelled by motives of morality in introducing his bill. "If I could do it without violating the United States Constitution," he says, "I would place severe restrictions on the length and content of articles dealing with murder."

Judge Kates, who edited a special edition of the Camden (N. J.) Courier, advocates that: (1) crime be placed on an inside page; (2) that it have small headlines; and (3) that it be handled in less detail. His policy was put into practice the day he wasguest editor of the the Courier. This plan has been tried by various newspapers, but with different results. The Rocky Mountain News and Times and the Des Moines Registered have considered a similar plan to be sufficiently successful for adoption.

James Melvin Lee is among those who recommed that newspapers always give the outcome of crimes and that punishment be published in crime stories. The first part of this suggestion involves the interpretation of *news*, in which its two most important factors are timeliness and interest, and the delay in court procedure. Many cases are prolonged until the public, whose interests are ever restlessly shifting, have become indifferent, and the editors, realizing this, do not always continue the case to its conclusion.

The second part of Dr. Lee's suggestion should be considered still more carefully In the writer's statistical study of the newspapers for Dec. 15 and Jan. 15, it was found that the front pages of these dailies contained numerous stories of crime punishment. It will be remembered that certain Chicago newspapers were instrumental in bringing about the investigation of the promiscuous parole that was going on in that city.

Newspapers do not seem unwilling to do their share in publishing news of punishment, yet one cannot help wondering how the press could be held accountable for not publishing the punishment for such cases as mentioned in a Times editorial.

This editorial came as a result of a young man's having been shot fatally while robbing a fur shop. In 1916 he had been convicted for burglary and his sentence suspended. He seemed repentant. According to the Times, he contented himself with petit larceny and was sent to the penitentiary therefor. After that he was arrested twice for grand larceny and once for burglary.

Six of his partners held by the police had consonant records. The career of one began in 1917 when he was arrested for burglary and his sentence was suspended. He was discharged on a grand larceny charge in 1919 and was arrested for burglary again in 1920. Again he was discharged. In 1921 he was once more arrested, for attempt at burglary and released on bail "to resume his old trade".[8]

One can see the impossiblity of the newspaper's printing punishment when there is none in cases of this sort. The newspapers, however, have a duty which

7. Editorial answer: (N. Y. Times, March 10, 1920) "A few years ago Albany passed a statute prescribing and limiting the newspaper accounts of executions. ... The legislature passed an unconstitutional statute and it was repealed."

8. Virginia has a statute that provides that, when any convict shall have been twice before sentenced in the United States to confinement in the penitentiary, he shall, on being convicted of felony in Virginia, be given a life term.—Times, Jan. 27, 1922.

they can perform, and many of the leading newspapers are doing this daily. Editorially, they may fight against practices of this sort. This is exemplified by the spirit with which the Times made an editorial attack.

> "Criminals must be punished, not coddled. Bail must be made a good deal stiffer. The suspended sentence should be most intelligently used or itself be suspended. The parole business should be greatly reduced and watched with the utmost carefulness, if any carefulness suffices.
>
> "Instead of throwing its arm lovingly around the poor, dear criminal, justice should put him where the community will be safe from him, and keep him there.
>
> "He is sure of advantages enough in the technicalities of the law and in delays, negligences and mistakes. There is no danger that he will cease to have a full opportunity and all possible means of keeping out of jail.
>
> "Give the community at least something like a fair chance. Protect the public safety a good deal more and its enemies a good deal less."

Former Justice Goff of the American Bar Association suggested, in 1922, the disbarment of lawyers who gave interviews discussing the cases of their clients before trials. He said:

> "The newspapers are not so much to blame as the bar. In my humble opinion it is a dishonorable thing for a lawyer to try his cases in the newspapers before they come before the proper tribunal. Members of the bar may be prompted by a desire to help their clients but more frequently to exploit themselves."

In answer to the question as to whether he thought crime stories in the newspapers inspired young men to commit crime, a member of the association answered:

> "The press has been helpful in my experience of crime. The fact that the newspapers printed so much about the recurrence of crime here stirred up public sentiment and this has been very helpful in legislation. We have found the press just as quick and just as willing to feature the results of the prosecution of the thugs and the criminal as of their crimes, and this has been the power to strike terror to the hearts of criminals. They feel that crime is no longer very safe or profitable here."[9]

Former Justice Goff says that the cardinal fault of criminal justice is the lack of promptness and finality in the administration of justice. A speedy and certain justice is what is needed.

Sir Basil Thomson, criminologist and former head of the Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yards, in an address in New York, in 1922 said:

> "The gun is responsible for much of your adolescent crime. In England no dealer dares to sell to anyone without a license and no licenses whatever are given to private persons. That is why our London detectives almost never carry revolvers. The criminals

9. Editorial answer: (Times, June 3, 1922) "The district attorney erred a little perhaps when he said that the publicity the criminals had received 'aroused the conscience of the public.' What it aroused was the municipal administration to the folly of continuing to deny the existence of the situation and to taking energetic measures for the remedying of the situation."

haven't any either. The English boy, tempted to stage a holdup, refrains because he knows he'll get his head cracked, but if he had a gun he would probably try it."

"You need a nation-wide law against firearms, like ours, which punishes the seller along with the buyer and possessor."

His other suggestions are: (1) quick trials, (2) sure sentences; (3) no bail for convicted criminals awaiting appeal; and (4) a provision for amending indictments pending trial.

In England a census showed that 90 per cent of the prisoners began their career of crime before reaching the age of 21. Also, in that country, according to Sir Basil, only 1 out of every 412,000 persons is murdered in a year as compared to 1 in every 12,000 in America.

Commissioner Richard E. Enright suggests that:

"A great deal of petty crime could be prevented by home and religious training. Where there is no respect for a Supreme Being there can be no value placed on human life and on property by those who lack religious feeling. Lots of these young men who commit these crimes have never earned an honest dollar and do not intend to begin. This is a false and criminal psychology and leads to a life of crime."

He advocates Boy Scout movements and schools as Community centers.

"Keep the children off the streets.....Make life attractive to children through every possible social agency and you will find that crime statistics will make a sharp drop."

Professor Ross is quoted as having said:

"The newspaper cannot be expected to remain dignified and serious now that it caters to the common millions, instead of, as formerly, to the professional and business classes. To interest errand boy and factory girl and raw immigrant it had to become spicy, amusing, emotional and chromatic. For these, blame then the American people."

Many other persons besides Prof. Ross are of the opinion that it is the public that needs reform first. Just how this reform may be brought about has not been discovered. Suggestions have been made for improving the newspaper and criminal procedure, but a suggestion for improving the public is not so easily found.

The expression, "giving the public what is wants," has been questioned. What is it the public wants? The editor must be able to answer this question, in order to satisfy the buyer and to maintain a large circulation for his newspaper. There is no other acceptable way of determining the answer.

Lee A. White, editorial executive of the Detroit News, in an address before the Medill School of Journalism, pictured the news-reading method of the average subscriber thus:

"Column 1. Disarmament conference. The reader: 'Disarmament conference, um, um, um. Japan, um, um. Shantung, um.' Finished.

"Column 2. Stillman case. No ums. Close attention. Occasional murmur of 'Can you beat that?' One reader says he scans the columns because the case is a society scandal. Another merely says that it is 'hot stuff'. Both skip nary a word.

"Column 3. The farmer bloc in congress. The reader: 'um, um. Well, I know what I think of farmers.' Finished.

"Column 4. Murder. The reader says, 'Here's my story in real life. Why it's as good as a novel.' No further sound from him for 12 minutes. Finished.

"Column 5. Orchestra deficit. Orchestra must be saved. The reader says, 'Is that so? Well, let somebody save it then.' Finished."

Polls have been taken in order to find what the public wants, yet the "public" as it is known to the newspaper editors is composed neither of college presidents nor of ministers, but of people in every type of occupation. Their only qualification for belonging to this public is the ability to read. For the majority of persons, whom no studies could reach, the newspaper circulation alone will reflect what it wants.

In connection with this thesis, significant observations were made of the students at the newspaper table in the first corridor in the Library of the University of Missouri. Although students represent but a small portion of the reading public, upon them, more than on any other group, will rest later the responsibility of creating a demand on the part of the public for more worthwhile material.

Granting that students are not living under normal circumstances, that they are more or less superficial from being in a state of perpetual excitement through social and student activities, the fact remains that they are acquiring habits which will remain with them. Responsibility that comes to them as they grow older will tend to modify these habits, however.

When students return to their home communities, where they become voters and taxpayers, the stimuli for more substantial reading matter will be greater.

The experiment regarding what the student public wants, was conducted during the latter half of the fall semester, 1925-1926, and during the first month of this semester. The observations were made while the students were unaware of an observer.

What do the students read? The types of material included: news, cartoons and "funnies," editorials, advertisements, pictures (from strictly picture sections), sports, and continued stories. The observations were checked:

Obs.	News	Carts.	Eds.	Ads	Pict.	Spts.	Stories	Total
Og. 4b.	1	2	1					4
2g. 3b.	1	2		1	1			5

in this manner. If the students were only glancing at the headlines no note was made of them. Only those who seemed engrossed were counted.

There were 126 observations made in all and from these the following statistics were found:

Subjects	No. of Students	Per cent
Cartoons	160	35.8
News	124	27.7
Sports	72	16.0
Advertisements	39	8.7
Editorials	32	7.1
Pictures	16	3.6
Continued stories	5	1.1
Total	448	100.0

There was a ratio of three boys to one girl in this total. It was interesting to observe the way in which many of the students hurriedly turned the pages in search of Mutt and Jeff, Jiggs and other favorite cartoons.

It was impossible to subdivide news into other classifications with any degree of accuracy. More than half of those reading news were reading from the upper portion of the first page.

From these studies it is obvious that the students are not interested in political and civic issues. Their reading is more for entertainment and amusement and for information. The only person at the reading table who was obviously not a student was a preacher, who was reading the comic strip.

A study of any other group of the reading public would of course show different results, yet much superficiality in choice of reading matter would probably be found in any study.

What is to be done about the public, even though it may generally be conceded that it needs reformation?

Education has been suggested as a deterrent to crime, and it might also be suggested as a means for improving the tastes of the public. Classes in literature are found in high schools, while the beginning of the study of literature as well as of history is found in the grammar schools.

In order that any reform might be brought about, in the "public," attempts would have to be started in grades in which all children are compelled by law to attend. If a study of the classics and differnet types of literature aids in literary appreciation and creates a demand for better books, it seems that a similar study of the newspaper would raise the standards of the newspaper-reading public, which far exceeds the literature-reading public.

The great importance of the newspaper is aptly expressed by E. C. Hayes, professor of sociology, University of Illinois.

> "The press is as essential to democratic control of activity in a nation as nerve fibers to the control of activity in a vertebrate animal. Without it a democracy of a hundred million would be like a vast jellyfish, inert and certain to fall to pieces. Public opinion is dependent upon publicity, and no other medium of communication is adequate to make a vast population into one public. On the other hand, a society composed of capable, intelligent and reliable individual, who have the means of prompt and pervasive intercommunications is practically certain to become a true democracy. If the many can think and act together they are more powerful than any tyrant or

> oligarchy. The degree of their freedon and power to promote their interests by organized co-operation, will be directly proportional to two things: first, the intelligence and reliability of the individuals; second, the adequacy of their means of intercommunication."

When one considers that only 35 out of every 100 students entering the first grade reach the first year in high school and that only 36 out of every 100 entering the ninth grade remain to graduate, one can see that if the taste of the public is to be changed through education, it must be initiated early. Since 92 per cent of all students between 6 and 21 years are in the elementary schools, 6 per cent in the high schools and 2 per cent in colleges and universities, it is evident that this training would have to begin in the elementary schools.

CONCLUSIONS

1. *Summary and conclusions.* The purpose of this study, as explained in the Introduction, is fourfold: (1) to give a general analysis of the crime news situation; (2) to present certain statistics showing the extent, cost and increase of crime, and to indicate the amount and prominence of crime news, in the daily newspapers; (3) to show the trend of the arguments for and against the publication of crime news, in so far as these arguments represent outstanding attitudes of the public; and (4) to form certain conclusions regarding the newspaper presentation of crime news. A summary of each of these will point out the extent to which they have been accomplished.

General Analysis of the Crime News Situation

In order to have a sufficient background for an understanding of crime news, the early history of crime publicity was traced briefly from the time of Acta Diurna to modern times. It was found that in the Elizabethan period, particularly, there were crimes parallel to those found in the present generation. The ballads and plays presented vividly and minutely gruesome details, the likeness of which cannot even be found in a "yellow" journal today.

The striking difference between the literature of that time and the modern newspaper was that in each case punishment could be recorded, while the same is not true in the crime story in the daily paper, since punishment is uncertain.

It was found in a study of the historical changes of the press that the path for the development of journalism was not smooth, and that one of its mosmomentous changes was that of becoming a "cheap-priced press." This ent larged the public to include all classes, and presented the problem of satisfying persons of all types.

The so-called "yellow" journal came, following a change in the New York Times from a three cent to a one-cent paper. Many scare heads were adopted by the "yellows" and they made use of the fact that, as John Macy expresses it, "everybody likes a story and there are only a few souls in the world who yearn at breakfast for information."

The modern press is of a chromatic nature, being represented by colors other than the yellow, the bad. There are: blue, the despondent; black, the ignorant; white, the pure and honest; and red, the sensational.

The great difference between the American and English newspapers is that the former has much less foreign news. The English newspapers, otherwise, resemble the American newspapers in content, but, while they can be compared, the crime conditions of the two countries are greatly contrasted.

Consideration was given to studies which have already been made of the newspapers to find the extent to which crime news is published. The first study, made by John Gilmer Speed, was illustrative of a common mistake of most critics of the newspaper, i. e., taking a study of papers from a particular locality on given dates, and calling the results indicative of the press, whereas a study of those of another locality is likely to show opposite results for the same dates.

He said that he found in New York a steady "deterioration," while the Chicago newspapers "improved in the other direction." Not even these two cities are representative of the country, because of their size and excessive crime rates.

Dr. Alvan A. Tenney's study is valuable to this study in that it illustrates what is meant by "mirroring public opinion." It shows that the newspaper, as an institution, reflects ideals and standards of the people for which institutions exist.

The fact that he found the five New York newspapers printed in English less alike than those in any of the other classes also shows the heterogeneity of American journalism. The American public is more heterogeneous than the public in any other country. It is made up of persons of all different nationalities who still have many of the traditions they have brought to this country with them. These people are a part of the American newspaper public—a public whose reading tastes are on a level (and often below) the standards of the chromatic newspapers which they buy.

In the American neswpaper, according to Professor Garth's study, crime news was sixth in amount of space, while it was seventh in point of least variability. Mr. Riis found that crime news was fifth in amount of space, with business, sports, amusements and politics greater.

These studies show that a comparatively small amount of space is actually given to crime news; that news of more importance, said to be "crowded out" by crime news, occupies a greater amount of space. They also illustrate the fact that it is its prominence which arouses criticism, rather than the total amount of space that crime news occupies. No extensive study could be found of this prominence. The study made by the Wharton School of Journalism approaches more nearly than any other, a consideration of that phase.

In its classification, police news covered 22.5 per cent of the front page. Since this study included only "eight leading newspapers," it cannot represent a great portion of the press.

The experiments in segregation and elimination of crime news show that the newspapers are not wholly indifferent to criticism—that they are, as ever, "feeling the pulse" of the public and will make any changes demanded and needed by this public, but not by just a part of the public.

STATISTICAL STUDY

A review of certain crime statistics brought out the following facts: (1) the United States has the largest crime rate—that in homicides alone, it is three times greater than Italy which is second on the list; (2) crime statistics in the United States are more incomplete than those in England, France and Germany[10]; (3) the prison population in England is on the decrease, while in America indications are that it is increasing; and (4) an estimation is that crime costs the United States $2,500,000 a day.

Newspapers in general do not have as much space given to crime news as one would expect, considering the abnormally large crime rates. Since the percentage of space devoted to crime news was found to be small, in the previous studies, the statistical study for this thesis was more for the purpose of showing the prominence given such mews than to find its extent. The amount of space given to crime in relation to other news, including the space given headlines and picture, however, was found.

Crime, in the small-town newspapers studied, occupied 8.32 per cent of the front page space, the two other types occupying more space were: civic, 16.38 per cent , and political, 10.48 per cent. It occurred at the top of the col-

10. Statistics from Germany are not available since the war.

umns of the first page 17 out of a possible 164 times, while business had the same number, political, 25 and civic, 33.

In the metropolitan papers for the two dates, crime occupied a position at the top of the first-page columns 73 out of a possible 445 times. The only type of story appearing more often was political, with 124. Although a special section is given to business in each city paper, it appeared 41 times at the top of these columns. From the studies of the total amount of space given to crime news it was found to be only sixth or seventh in relation to the other types of news.

From these statistics, two conclusions are evident: (1) that the small-town paper is not a part of the "crime press," so called by critics who liken American newspapers to the Newgate Calendar, though it is an important part of the "press," as the term is used in professional journalism; (2) that crime news in the city dailies appears magnified because of its prominence and emphasis.

The headline also is a factor in contributing to the belief that a great amount of space is given to crime. It attracts and emphasizes the story. The headlines in the newspapers studied, told of punishment in as large type as they told of crimes being committed. Stories of punishment were also given prominent positions on the front pages, and often in the upper half of the pages.

Arguments for and Against Crime Publication

Public opinion is vital to the press. With it, the press reciprocates in the matter of strength and force. Whether or not there is any justification, the newspaper does "give the public what it wants." Just as a merchant caters to his customers, the newspaper too must satisfy its readers. For, no matter how public spirited the newspaper may be, it is of no more value than a scrap of paper, unless it has the confidence and trust of the readers.

The editor may strive to give better news stories than his readers demand —which most editors undoubtedly do—yet his newspaper cannot rise much higher than the level of the public's taste. What it really is that the public wants is a debatable question, which can obviously be answered only in a negative way, i. e., by determining what it is that the public does not want.

No customer will continue to accept rotten fruit from the grocer. No more will the average reader buy newspapers which constantly emphasize salacious stories, written not through any desire to improve the community, but to arouse morbid curiosity in evil. A newspaper of this sort would have a perverted idea of salesmanship, and could be classified only in the black type of chromatic journalism.

The newspaper, then, prints news of happenings, which the public allow to occur. If they did not want them to happen, they should have prevented them; if they were unaware of their happening, they should want to know about them, so that they will be able to prevent them in the future.

Public opinion seems to present strong argument on both sides of the question as to whether publicity is deterrent to evil doing. Certain indications tend to show that it is. Scientific proof in either direction is unobtainable.

William Healy theorizes upon, "Why newspapers do not appear as any great cause for criminalism," with the following results:

1. Criminal careers are begun before there is extensive reading of the newspapers.
2. Young offenders, as a rule, care for little but the comic portions.

3. They are just as much interested in accidents as in criminalistic material.

4. Only rarely has his group of investigators found the slightest indication that a newspaper story of a criminal has developed hero worship.

5. One should be inclined to believe that there are good psychological reasons why newspapers do not have anything like the same bad effect as literature of the dime novel order, or as pernicious moving pictures and other pictures.

6. There is ordinarily no glamor whatever about the story of a criminal as told in the papers.

7. He is nearly always a sufferer, being either hunted for or under duress.

8. He is often shown with a haggard face, and his sufferings are recounted.

9. This is altogether different from the history of a bandit as told in cheap novel form.

10. The constant crowding of the news apers with all sorts of ideas can but tend to militate against the influence of any single story. There is no chance for following up and living in a life story as there is in a novel or in a story that is told in moving pictures. We should also remember that many newspapers have the best sort of personal counsel in large type in the same edition where the gruesome is carefully depicted. Perhaps these facts account for the unexpectedly slight proof of bad influence.

Dr Heal also ay :

"Weak minded people, in general, are very prone to accept suggestion. One source of suggestion must inevitably be the newspaper, but we are thoroughly convinced by our own inquiry on this point as well as by the failure of others to definitely prove it, that, as compared with other possible sources of pernicious influence, the newspaper plays a comparatively small part. If it were otherwise, the enormous amount of reading of newspapers that goes on would result in an obvious connection with the production of delinquency.

"Of course we have frequently met with a show of personal pride in an offender at being written up in the newspaper. However, this was always after the deed and we have never actually known that the desire to be written up had anything to do with the production of an offense."

Definite Conclusions

That some newspapers print too much crime news and give it too much prominence—that they fill many columns with it at the expense of space which should be devoted to more deserving news of another sort—cannot be denied. Such newspapers, however, constitute only a small portion of the press, and are not, in any sense representative.

Just how much space and what prominence should be given such news is a matter of varying opinion. The majority of the critics believe that the persons who would profit most by the suppression of news are the criminals themselves, for their acts would be less likely to be apprehanded. For many criminals, the publication of their names and deeds most surely is a part of their punishment.

The desire for publicity may be in some cases an incentive to commit crime to "show off," but the promise of proper punishment most probably would quell any such expression.

Criminals and criminality are found in the literature of all countries. Much of this literature[11] is studied in the public schools by children in their early adolescence, during a time in which they are extremely imaginative.

Most of these children are at an age when they do not read newspapers to any extent, yet there is no demand for the banishment of crime from poems, plays or novels of a more serious kind that they read. The vast numbers of crimes committed by young persons before the age of 21 (90 per cent of all cases are of crimes committed by boys in childhood or by people who began their criminal course while in childhood[12]) do not seem to be instigated by the newspaper, although it is within this age of adolescence that youth thirsts for heroics.

Then at what age is it that the newspaper would stimulate crimes? No research has found the answer. Concerning suggestion acting as a deterrent for crime by showing punishment for wrong-doing, it is as impossible to cite scientific evidence. Many critics say that it does, but that the newspapers do not publish punishment with the crime stories they print.

This criticism is unjustified. The studies of the newspapers for this thesis showed that the newspapers print stories of punishment which equal in prominence the crime stories, but facts show that punishment cannot always be printed, for in many cases there is none.

Although one frequently hears a reference to "the press", he must remember that this press is composed of 2,453 daily newspapers and 14,109 weekly newspapers, besides the numerous triweekly, semiweekly, fortnightly, monthly and other types—that there are 22,190 different newspapers, each having its own editorial policy and individual make-up.

There would be no way of measuring accuratcly news published by these papers, unless there were a law, as Dr. Tenney suggests, requiring each newspaper to publish the weekly, monthly and yearly averages of the percentage of attention which, upon continuous analysis of space, they found they were actually giving to various specific subjects.

The problem does not appear to be sufficient to warrant legislation, which would be disastrous to the purposes of freedom of the press and would avail nothing.

II. *Suggestions*. The newspaper has many faults, yet most of these are being outgrown. There are still many changes which might be brought about, not only in the newspaper, but also in legal procedure and in public opinion as well. These three are so closely related in regard to the publication of crime news that it is impossible often times to find out whose faults are whose.

In just what proportion any one of these can be blamed, there is no way to determine. One fact remains clear, and that is that the three factors must be in harmony if they are to change "the rising tide of crime" to a falling tide.

It is the duty of the newspaper to follow each story of crime, with its punishment, just as it is the duty of the executives of the law to mete out de-

11. An example of this is the Shakespearean tragedy.

12. Statistics given by Clarence Darrow in his lecture on *Crime, Its Causes and Treatment*, delivered March 26, 1926, in Columbia.

served punishment, and, of the public to demand that these executives carry out this duty.

The law, the public and the newspaper are prone to blame each other for crime conditions, and not to see their own obligations in the matter. The enterprising newspaper is constantly exposing bad conditions and urging reform.

If it is true that a murderer has a three-to-one chance for escape from arrest; that bails are given indiscriminately; that there are abuses in the parole system; and that the criminal bar makes a business of freeing criminals—then the public has a right to know this and it is the right and the duty of the press to inform them.

A striking example of the way this may be done was illustrated by the splendid work the Chicago newspapers did in a recent campaign to rid Chicago of crime and vice. The newspaper campaign consisted of news stories, editorials and cartoons which exposed the excessive crime conditions in that city. As a part of this crusade against crime, the Chicago Daily Tribune printed a list of those criminals freed by this state parole board in Cook County, (Ill.) alone. There were nearly 1000 in two years.

An advertising campaign, in the Brooklyn Eagle and conducted by Brooklyn business men, shows likewise, the way in which the newspaper may be a medium for combating crime.

The newspaper has fought a long and tedious fight to obtain its present status. It has been criticised from the beginning, yet its faults were more imaginary than actual. Its bad influence has been asserted, but not proved; its good influence is daily recognized.

The newspaper has done much to orient the public with crime conditions and to bring them to a realization that many changes will have to be made before the term "the most criminal country" will cease being applied to the United States.

Dr. Gillin writes of the "challenge of the rising tide of crime":

> "We have seen that for fifty years or more crime in the United States has been of grave proportions. Since the war, serious crime—murder, robbery, rape, adultery, lewdness—has increased. In our our great cities and on our highways people are held up and robbed, even killed, if they resist. Women are attacked and murdered. The same young men appear in these escapades again and again. They seem to bear charmed lives. The law holds too little terror for them. Against them the police and judges are sometimes impotent, although our prisons and reformatories are filled with an army of the less successful.
>
> "Our agents of justice often are defeated. The law sets limits to the penalty; technicalities clog the machinery; hence the legal dawdling and the consequent frequent escape of a rascal whom everyone believes guilty. Definite sentences let out the unreformed. Soft-headed, sentimental governors and pardon boards with friends release miscreants. Our laws offer only a measure of social protection. Unwhipped villainy struts about with impunity, defiant of the law and its agents, the cynosure of weak and silly youth thirsting for cheap heroics. The situation is a challenge to all good citizens. Our lives are in constant jeopardy. Our property is unsafe. Virtue is threatened."

Dr. Gillin also says that "every leader of men, every maker of opinion is faced by the seriousness of the problem." The press is without doubt the greatest maker of opinion, and it is its duty through editorials and crime stories to arouse the public to the enormity of the situation, and to stimulate reform.

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