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A WORKING PROGRAM FOR AN ADEQUATE SYSTEM OF
COLLECTING CRIMINAL STATISTICS IN ILLINOIS.^a

ARTHUR JAMES TODD.^b

That criminal statistics in the United States are either wholly lacking or woefully defective is a commonplace. Experts and students, both foreign and American, unite in protest. That they are an urgent necessity is equally a commonplace to the criminologist, the criminal lawyer, the efficient public official, and the enlightened citizen. For we are all Positivists, at least to the extent of believing that criminals are the product of definite even though obscure and complex causes, and that it is better to prevent crime than to sit in fear and pay taxes. Some of us are beginning to apply the popular device "Safety first" to this whole problem of dealing with crime. But to deal with it intelligently we must at least know its extent.

We must admit with regret, however, that the average man in the street, or even the average policeman, magistrate, lawyer or legislator, does not see the matter quite in this light. They too frequently look upon our demand for accurate information as the fad of impractical cranks. But is the captain of industry a faddist or a crank when he demands a monthly or yearly balance sheet in order to find out whether he is going up or down hill? We already recognize the importance of voluminous statements of the production, consumption, export value, etc., of pig-iron and corn, of mules and sorghum in our national balance sheet. But so far neither the federal government nor a single state (not even Massachusetts or Indiana), has made an efficient effort to determine how stands our social health measured in terms of law and order or of criminality.

It will not be necessary for me to enlarge on the useful purposes to be served by statistics of crime, for the Committee on Criminal Statistics which reported to the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology in 1910 covered the matter thoroughly.

Granting our present low estate, what are the prospects for better things? Owing to the complexity of our political organization it is

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perhaps too much to expect an adequate federal bureau of criminal statistics for a good many years to come. But we need not wait for the federal government or other states to come into line. We need not wait for the adoption of a model set of blanks available for international as well as inter-state use, according to Dr. von Mayr's suggestion at the International Congress on Hygiene and Demography last year.¹ We need not wait even until the federal government carries out the suggestion for a "registration area" of criminal statistics analogous to that in operation for mortality statistics.² Illinois itself should set the pace. Indeed, we in Illinois are particularly well located for such a start. The state is typical of this whole central area. Rural and urban populations are nicely balanced. The small town abuts on the big city. Our population is sufficiently cosmopolitan to yield some evidence on the problem of race and crime. Our penal system shows considerable variety, including, as it does, prisons, a reformatory, hospital for insane criminals, schools for juvenile delinquents, juvenile courts, the probation system for adults and children, the indeterminate sentence, and parole.

Better still, the organization of our state system of supervising charitable and penal institutions is favorable to the purpose of collecting criminal statistics. Indeed by an amendment to the statute at the third special session of the 47th General Assembly (approved June 11, 1912), the State Charities Commission is directed to establish "a Bureau of Criminal Statistics of which its executive secretary shall be the director. It shall be the duty of said bureau to collect and publish annually the statistics of Illinois relating to crime, and it shall be the duty of all courts of Illinois, police magistrates, justices of the peace, clerks of all courts of record, sheriffs, keepers of lock-ups, workshops, and city prisons or other places of detention, holding men, women or children under conviction for crimes or misdemeanors or under charges of violations of the criminal statutes to furnish said bureau annually such information on request, as it may require in compiling said statistics."

The law may need strengthening later, but at any rate it authorizes a beginning. What, then, shall we demand of this bureau? What sort of information do we want? My demands are moderate, far less than

¹ He proposed that co-operating committees of this Congress and of the International Statistical Institute should be established to work out these schedules and to consider the international nomenclature and scientific classification of crime.

² See Robinson, *History and Organization of Criminal Statistics in the U. S.*, ch. vi.

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I might get from Continental sources. The law as it stands gives us blanket authority, but the law cannot confer intelligence upon officials who are required to make the returns. Hence the rubrics under which returns are listed must be as few as possible and free from ambiguity. Since we want an accurate numerical statement of the amount of detected crime we should require the reporting of every case of every class of crime recognized by statute. We may neglect, I suppose, infractions of police regulations or town ordinances, though they would be of considerable interest and value.³ Perhaps in time we may be able to get from police desk-sergeants, say, carbon or press copies of their "blotters." We shall, in all likelihood, discover that returns for serious crimes will be more accurate and complete than those for minor offenses, because they engage more closely the attention of police, magistrates and public. The discrepancy should diminish in cities with well organized police and police courts, and approach the vanishing point under the regime of such Municipal Courts as those of Chicago. Mr. Koren is of the opinion that no classes of crime should be exempted. He suggests relieving, if necessary, certain inferior justices' courts without clerical help from making full reports. Would this not mean creating a bad precedent for meager returns? How would it do to offer a small fee to courts employing no regular clerk, as we do to doctors to encourage reporting of births and deaths? To this there are at least two objections: First, it would necessitate special legislation; second, it would scarcely prove more effective than it has with the doctors; for if I can judge from federal reports and from our own State Charities Commission, the registration of vital statistics is anything but trustworthy or complete in Illinois. Perhaps after all the best we can expect from justices' courts is a return upon an abbreviated schedule.⁴ It may even be that for a time we can get these returns only through personal solicitation by the director of the bureau, or only from justices' courts of certain large cities, say Chicago, Peoria and Springfield.

Shall we include only cases of conviction? No, we should report all cases presented, if we are to get an adequate measure of the respective activities of police, prosecuting attorneys, courts and public sentiment. Convictions for lynchings, for instance, yield in most states not the slightest measure of the prevalence of lynchings.⁵ Within one single

³ Von Mayr urges including all statistics of minor offenses dealt with by the police, also of preliminary and interlocutory as well as final decisions.

⁴ Say schedule 1 with questions 5, 14-22 omitted, and 3, 10, 12 pruned to fit the limited range of business in inferior courts.

⁵ Tennessee, Kentucky and Texas passed anti-lynching laws in 1897; but from 1897-1903, though 110 lynchings occurred, not a single conviction for lynching is recorded.

state, of course, the number of convictions alone might be taken as a measure for the movement of criminality from year to year or decade to decade, it being assumed that the ratio of discovered and convicted to undiscovered and unconvicted crime is fairly constant. But this is, to say the least, gambling with probabilities. For the "subjective element" in judges alone is much more variable than we would be inclined to suspect unless faced with definite figures. For example, in 1910 it was shown that in disposing of arraignments of "rounders" in New York City courts the chances of freedom varied from 20% to 80%, according to the judge. And even in so well balanced a tribunal as our Chicago Municipal Court the first annual report of the Adult Probation Officer showed a variation of from 1 to 128 persons placed on probation by the several judges. In the absence of explanatory figures one cannot tell whether this variation represents the varying attitude of judges toward the general principle of probation or whether it is a result of assigning to each judge a particular type of cases. Adequate statistics ought to show whether the discrepancy lies in the nature of the case or in judicial idiosyncrasy.

The model schedule adopted by the *Congrès International de Statistique* at its St. Petersburg meeting in 1874 contemplated returns in every case, whatever the result of proceedings. German and English returns include all cases presented, whether they result in conviction, acquittal or non-suit. Statistics of the German Empire include only offenses against imperial statutes, not those against local ordinances, only cases which come to valid judicial decision before regularly constituted courts (*die durch rechtskräftige richterliche Entscheidung erledigt sind*) but not those subjected to preliminary examination only (*Vorverfahren* or *Voruntersuchung*), nor those settled by police authorities. These latter correspond somewhat to the so-called "unofficial cases" which our probation officers are frequently called upon to handle without court proceedings, or to cases disposed of by the police under some such arrangement as the "Golden Rule System" inaugurated by ex-Chief Kohler in Cleveland. These, while numerous and important, could hardly be reported unless we include in our plan the reporting of all presentments to grand juries and all undetected or unprosecuted offenses.

Schedule I, I have designed as the pivotal report blank around which the others revolve. It is somewhat of a hybrid. It is based, as most such schedules are, on the standard form adopted by the *Congrès international de Statistique* in 1874. But as German critics pointed out at the time, this form as well as the fuller form proposed by the *Congrès* two years

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later is too detailed to be practicable.⁹ While it would be most desirable, for instance, to learn the offender's precise "degree of instruction," the "state of his fortune," the "presumed motives for his crime," whether he was born legitimately or not, such information would be extremely difficult to get. It would require considerable searching to check up the state of the offender's fortune or his motives. And usually one would have to depend on the offender's own word as to his legitimacy, the probability being that he would not confess illegitimacy. The German *Zählkarte* used for reporting criminal statistics were originally based on the standard schedule, including 11 of its 22 questions; with slight modifications this form as adopted in 1882 is still in use. It includes most of the items regarding judicial proceedings and social status of the offender contained in the minimum-schedule recommended by Mr. Koren's committee to the Institute in 1910. I have deviated a little from both these forms. Mr. Koren omitted religion; I have added it. Neither the German *Zählkarte* nor Mr. Koren's minimum states whether the defendant while waiting for trial was in jail or on bail; this item I believe should be included, as it is in England. Since there is some question of its practicability at the outset, I have indicated that it may be omitted for the time being, but added as soon as possible. (Question 7a). I have cast the questions so far as possible in such form that merely a check mark would answer. It would have been desirable to design a blank to be filled out in the first instance by the police, then attached to the complaint and other documents, and passed on up through the state's attorney's office with his additional endorsements and papers, and so on; but experience so far has proved this scheme unworkable in the United States.

The questions relating to judicial procedure hardly need explanation. Mr. Koren suggests that such items as "died," "jumped bail," "released on habeas corpus," which I have placed under the rubric "Disposition" should be made separate headings; but it seems to me that this would unnecessarily string out the schedule and alarm the clerks. We must compress as many questions as possible under the fewest possible headings. As the returns are to be made quarterly, and as appeals move notoriously slowly, it may be necessary to add a supplementary schedule showing when and whence the appeal originated, where it went, whether judgment of the lower court was affirmed or reversed, or a new trial granted. In the case of a new trial any modifications of the history of the case as already transmitted to the Bureau would have to be noted on a new schedule (Schedule I).

⁹ See Köhne, *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung u. Verwaltung*, (n. F.) vol. ix, pp. 527-43.

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SCHEDULE I—(For all cases not heard in juvenile courts.)

1. NAME
2. OFFENSE CHARGED
3. PROCEEDINGS INSTIGATED BY: indictment, information, presentment, inquisition, complaint, affidavit, coroner's commitment, certificate from Circuit Court, court order for contempt.....
4. DATE OF OFFENSE
5. OF INDICTMENT
6. DATE OF COMMENCING TRIAL
7. OF FINAL DISPOSITION.
8. TRIAL COURT
9. MODE OF TRIAL: jury, court.
10. PLEA: Guilty; guilty of.....; not guilty; nolle contendere (State precise offense admitted in plea.)
11. DISPOSITION OTHER THAN BY TRIAL OR BY PLEA OF GUILTY: dismissed, placed on file, nolle prossed, indictment quashed, demurrer sustained, continued, died, jumped bail, released on habeas corpus.
12. VERDICT: (state if for other or lesser offense than charged).
13. SENTENCE: death.
imprisonment—penitentiary, county jail, workhouse, penal farm, reformatory, hospital for criminal insane
term—life, indeterminate with maximum of.....minimum of.....; specified years.....months.....days; during minority.
fine \$.....; plus costs \$.....? paid? jail for non-payment?
sentence suspended
sentence suspended and probation for term of.....
14. APPEAL.—(state when taken, when decided)
15. SEX OF OFFENDER: male female
16. AGE LAST BIRTHDAY
17. BORN WHERE?
18. NATIONALITY: (a) AMERICAN, WHITE, COLORED, INDIAN; (b) ALIEN
How long in America? Naturalized?
Nationality of father? of mother?
19. Domestic condition: single, married, divorced, separated, widowed, orphan, (if minor).
20. Education: read, write.
21. Religion.
22. Occupation: (If minor without occupation, that of parents or guardian).
23. Previous convictions.

Since probation is already used to a considerable extent in this state, and we anticipate a wider and more effective use of the principle,

7a. In jail or on bail during this period.

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it will be necessary to get returns of defaulting probationers. This will have the double effect of enabling us to measure the efficacy of probationary treatment and to determine whether courts actually follow up the offenders they release or whether, as the police often charge, they "just turn them loose." Hence I should include a schedule showing the name, offense, date of conviction, date of admission to probation, date of revoking probation, why, and sentence. It may be objected that these details are too fine or that they belong not to a bureau of statistics but to courts or some organization of probation officers or to private investigators. But I reply that if we cannot get such elementary facts from our statistical system, then it is not worth the paper the law or our recommendations are written on.

I have laid considerable stress on the social status of the offender, since the bald statement of judicial procedure would give us merely an idea of the functioning of police and magistracy but no key to the social causes involved. It would have been desirable to learn many other things about this side of the question—the offender's health, whether his parents or other near relatives were criminally inclined, etc. But I presume such intensive studies must be made the subject of special research and not demanded of police and court officials or of the bureau, since, after all, a column of figures cannot be an encyclopedia. In practice it will probably prove wise for a year or so not to press too closely the four questions regarding social status (15-18 on Schedule I, covering age, sex, birthplace, nationality). The details asked for in questions 18b to 23, covering nationality of parents, domestic condition, education, religion, occupation, previous conviction, will have to be added gradually as the bureau gets into working order and officials are accustomed to the idea of reporting. At the end of perhaps five years it ought to be possible to use the complete schedule as I have outlined it.

Whether we should demand returns for reported but undetected crimes is an open question and a delicate one. Mr. Koren, in the report already noted, urged that they should be reported, but should not include petty offenses. Insofar as the police are concerned, I am afraid these returns would be difficult to get, for they would be tantamount to a confession of failure or of masterly inactivity. On the other hand, it is barely possible that the duty of making such returns might so stimulate the police that they would reduce the evidences of failure to the vanishing point.

Juvenile Court returns must be included. Schedule II indicates the minimum of information such a report should contain. If the clerks of these courts, probation officers, or whoever is charged with filling

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out the so-called "case history" of each individual as he appears before the court would send a carbon copy to the bureau it would obviate the necessity of such a special schedule. There is this difficulty, however, that these history blanks vary from county to county; some counties use none. Hence it will prove safer to devise and use a standard schedule, with the understanding that copies of case histories may be substituted when they contain the suggested minimum information. The question of reporting the names of children brought into the Juvenile Court may arise as a difficulty. But there should be no real objection, as Juvenile Court records are public documents even though they may not be used as evidence in subsequent criminal prosecutions. Some Juvenile Courts have been criticized because of their lax system of keeping records, especially in the matter of probationers and children placed out in private families. The necessity of reporting their operations to a central bureau should have a stimulating effect to business-like administration. The same, by the way, might be said of the influence upon courts of record in general. Some difficulty may be encountered through vagueness in the definitions and inconsistency in the use of the terms "delinquent" and "dependent" child. A truant, an incorrigible, or a petty thief might on occasion be dealt with as either dependent or delinquent. This gives a high degree of flexibility to the treatment of delinquent minors but makes hard sledding for the statistician.

I do not see how we can include presentments to the grand jury. For they fall neither into the class of undetected, unidentified, or unprosecuted crimes. If a crime has been committed, that fact might be noted and reported by the police. If the criminal is named and indicted he will appear in the court returns. But if he is only suspected and investigated by the grand jury, we have no more right to include him than A, B or C, apparently honest men, who are reported to the tax collector or to the court for jury duty.

SCHEDULE II. Juvenile Court.

1. NAME.
2. SEX.
3. AGE.
4. CHARGE.
5. PREVIOUS OFFENSES.
6. FAMILY: orphan, half-orphan, parents divorced, step-father, step-mother, (if possible indicate character of home).
7. SCHOOL.
8. OCCUPATION. (If at school and not working, that of parents).

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- 9. RELIGION.
- 10. COURT ORDER: dismissed, fined \$.....; probation for term; committed to (care of parent, probation officer, friend, minister, teacher, etc.).
committed to (institution) for term of.....
- 11.Court of.....County. 12. Date.....

SCHEDULE III. Prisoners Received.

- 1. INSTITUTION
- 2. DATE
- 3. NAME
- 4. SEX
- 5. AGE LAST BIRTHDAY.
- 6. NATIONALITY. (a) American—white, colored, mulatto, Indian. (b) Alien. naturalized how long in America
- 7. OFFENSE.
- 8. SENTENCED BY.....Court of (town, township, county, etc.)
onday of.....19.... for term of.....years.....
months.....days.
- 9. TRANSFERRED FROM
- 10. RETURNED FOR BREAKING PAROLE
- 11. DOMESTIC CONDITIONS: single, married, divorced, separated, widowed, orphan (if minor).
- 12. EDUCATION: read, write, (any other details possible).
- 13. RELIGION.
- 14. HEALTH. (Include deformities, etc.).
- 15. MENTALITY: normal, dull, superior, etc.
- 16. OCCUPATION.
- 17. PREVIOUS TERMS IN PENAL OR REFORMATORY INSTITUTIONS.

SCHEDULE IV. Prisoners Discharged.

- 1. INSTITUTION
- 2. DATE
- 3. NAME
- 4. SEX.
- 5. SERVING SENTENCE OF....years....months....days for offense of....
- 6. SENTENCE EXPIRED, paid fine, paroled, pardoned.
- 7. TRANSFERRED TO
- 8. RELEASED ON HABEAS CORPUS
- 10. DIED OF

I have ventured to suggest that we include coroners' returns. The law does not appear to contemplate this. But the reasons why we should

are obvious enough. The coroner is so closely associated with the sheriff and the magistrature, both historically and in present day practice, and his findings so closely link up with criminal procedure, that they should form an integral part of any scheme for criminal statistics. They, too, will serve to check up the efficiency of both the coroner's office and the local police. These returns might become illuminating social short-hand reports. Take a page from the verdicts of coroners' juries in English criminal statistics: note the sparsely filled columns "Murder," "Man-slaughter," "Justifiable Homicide;" note how the columns crowd up with "*Felo de se*," "Death by Neglect, Exposure, or Excess;" compare the definite verdicts with the "Open Verdicts;" run through the "Inquests held upon the Bodies of Children Suffocated whilst in Bed with their Parents or Others," and you get a very vivid picture of a domain that is not covered by ordinary police or magisterial statistics, while yet lying close to, or even overlapping them. Our bureau may not be able to handle coroners' returns for two or three years to come, but by that time we ought to be able to find out from these returns the sex, age, and cause of death according to the verdict of the coroner's jury, also whether criminal prosecution followed.⁷

For the statistics of fugitives from justice or extradited offenders I believe no special form of schedule will be necessary. The Governor's office usually reports these figures among its official acts. The bureau can easily make an informal arrangement with that office.

The real meaning and serviceability of all these classes of statistics will remain incomplete unless they are accompanied in every instance by an explanatory statement of new criminal legislation covering the repeal of obsolete statutes and the passage of new laws creating new types of crime or modifying procedure and penalties. Abolish, say, capital punishment, and the chances are strong that the figures of acquittals for murder will drop. Enact a law opening district workhouses, and vagrancy figures will disperse like morning mists from the columns of criminal returns.

In addition to these judicial statistics we must include prison and reformatory returns. These the law, as is now stands, covers pretty fully. The schedules I have prepared follow somewhat those used by the 13th census of the United States for its volume on prison and reformatory population. One covers prisoners received and the other prisoners discharged. They repeat somewhat the social data contemplated by Sched-

⁷The model bill proposed for registration of vital statistics will, if adopted in Illinois, provide for a State Registrar of Vital Statistics to whom coroners' findings will be reported, but they will refer only to the cause of death.

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ule I. They add questions about mentality, health, and recidivism which prison officials can perhaps answer better than prosecuting attorneys, police or justices' clerks. Question 8 refers to transfers from one penal institution to another, say, from Pontiac to Joliet, or from the hospital for criminal insane to the penitentiary. Question 9 is obvious enough. Question 16, regarding previous prison or reformatory terms, covers perhaps the most important item of information prison returns should disclose. I happened to state recently that probation and parole officers claim 75% of successful cases. A student came back immediately with the question, How many successful cases do prisons claim? I could only say that the "general impression" of prison authorities is that American prisons seem to encourage failure and "repeating" rather than success. Yet from two English sources this information for England and Wales can be turned up in a moment; for both the Statistical Branch in its Criminal Statistics, and the Commissioners of Prisons and Directors of Convict Prisons publish annually figures of recidivists and the number of their previous convictions. Statistics of recidivism began in Germany in 1894. Since 1890 the *Zählkarte* report previous convictions with date and punishment of the last.⁸

These two schedules (III and IV) ought to prove elastic enough for use in all types of detention institutions from lock-ups to penitentiaries. With slight modifications they should also serve for juvenile detention homes and reformatories. I have avoided any demands for total populations of these institutions, for they mean little unless accompanied by an elaborate analysis of the terms which inmates are serving. These figures are easily ascertained from general reports of the prisons and may be published if desired, but with the understanding that they involve the problem of "accumulations" and that the real measure of the movement of serious crime is the number of persons received in a given period.⁹ No less significant are the discharges. They should check up the figures of pardons and paroles. From prison reports also should come returns of witnesses detained, persons awaiting trial, insane temporarily detained, escaped prisoners, etc.

In all these schedules the unit is the individual delinquent rather than the case or the infraction of the law. Take the coroner's returns

⁸For several reasons the statistics will cover ten year periods. The figures for the first decennium (1895-1904) appear in *Statistik des Deutschen Reiches*, Bd. 176, with valuable comments on methods of gathering the data and computing the ratio of recidivism.

⁹Professor L. N. Robinson offers an ingenious method of resolving the problem of accumulations in an article, "Two Methods of Estimating the Growth of Criminality," *Publ. Amer. Stat. Asso.*, xii (n. s.) 807-12.

for inquests after a mine disaster. It is perfectly obvious that the individual victims are the only real measure of the damage. The case is not so obvious with crimes. Should we count ten charges of bootlegging or rebating against the same person as one or ten? Without going into a detailed discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the case-unit or the individual-unit (see Professor Robinson's article in the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, III, 245), we recommend the latter as the only practicable unit. This is altogether in line with Positivist Criminology which focusses its attention on the delinquent rather than on his crime. And it is also the method used by most statisticians. It is probable that a supplementary tabulation might be made of multiple offenses and their treatment. But in schedule I it is understood that the bureau will note only the offense which is most serious, or on which action proceeds furthest, or which receives the heaviest penalty, or if sentence is the same on two or more charges, that for which the law prescribes the maximum penalty. This is the English practice.

As far as practicable, these several returns should be made quarterly. The law says "annually." But this would, in practice, result in such a congestion of work at the end of the year, due to a long tradition of procrastination, that clerks would be inclined to shirk the whole business or turn in such fragmentary reports as the eleventh hour would permit. On the other hand, to require monthly reports would violate our most sacred traditions of local independence and would cast us all under the suspicion of being mere bureaucrats. There is the further practical difficulty that under a monthly system the bureau would be charged with three times as much correspondence as under the quarterly, assuming as we probably must, that gentle reminders will have to be sent out before each reporting date, at least until the habit of reporting is acquired. A comparison of these quarterly returns should yield some interesting correlations between seasons or temperature variations and criminality.

It may prove impossible to get these returns under the law as it now stands. Professor Robinson wrote me recently that from his experience it has been up-hill work to compel the county clerks to send in the returns. There ought, therefore, he says, to be an easy method of enforcing the law concerning the collection of these statistics. But what this easy method is we shall have to determine by experiment. Personally, I am inclined to trust rather to the tact and persuasion of the director of our bureau than to any summary penalties for non-reporting which we might deem necessary for strengthening the law. The bureau must be politic (which is vastly different from doing politics) and cul-

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tivative popularity. The director already covers this whole state in his inspection of county jails, almshouses and other public institutions. In the course of his rounds he will be in a position to strike up an acquaintance with the various local officers on whom we are dependent for information.

There is another problem that I should like to see the bureau tackle, viz., the cost of crime. For to a people that thinks considerably in terms of dollars, the money cost of crime is more striking than tabulations of offenses and criminals. Mr. Eugene Smith reported to the National Prison Association in 1900 that our national crime bill ran up to the incredible figure of \$600,000,000, or more than the value of our entire wheat crop. Though this report has been issued as a government document, all that we can accord these figures, and I am sure all that Mr. Smith would claim for them, is that they are suggestive. The difficulty is that other people have copied them without question. Rev. H. Hopkins repeated them to the Prison Association the following year with the statement that "crime is increasing and is growing more bold and uncontrolled," but he offers not a shred of evidence to buttress either this statement or his figures, Mr. Spalding and Mr. Koren have both given us more careful estimates of the money cost of crime for Massachusetts. I have attempted repeatedly to work out the cost of crime, and have played the Lorelei to students in the effort to get through them some definite information; but so far without exception they have gone to shipwreck! Worst of all, a professor of economics called on me recently for facts about the cost of crime in Illinois for an address he was preparing; but lo, when I went to my filing case, it was bare! And the fault was scarcely altogether mine. But there seems now, at least in Illinois, some prospect of more definite information. The Accountancy Department at the University of Illinois has been analyzing the accounts of Sangamon and Piatt counties. Upon the basis of these analyses a bill has been worked out and introduced to the present General Assembly (Senate Bill No. 38, introduced by Mr. Hay, Jan. 29, 1913), providing for the appointment of a State Examiner of Accounts whose business shall be to "formulate and prescribe uniform systems of bookkeeping and accounting, which shall be installed in the offices of all county clerks, clerks of courts, recorders of deeds, sheriffs, treasurers, state's attorneys, county superintendents of schools, coroners, auditors and all other county officers."

Of course even the most perfect system of public accounting would not give us any knowledge of the economic losses through convicted or undetected criminals; nevertheless, it would yield valuable information,

and it is an earnest of a growing desire to know what we are really doing in our public corporate capacity. I believe the bureau will do well to draw upon this State Examiner (if the office is created) for the figures which the law contemplates turning over to him.

I have so far assumed that a special Bureau of Statistics rather than police or judicial authorities should be charged with collecting and publishing criminal statistics. Perhaps a few words of justification for this assumption and for the law may not be amiss. The practice has varied considerably in our own country, and the results no less, except that on the whole the returns are mediocre and unreliable for purposes of comparison. Judicial statistics in 13 states go through the Attorney General's office; and in no case so far as I can determine are the returns at all complete or very serviceable. Usually they include only cases prosecuted by district attorneys. Frequently they tell nothing of the nature of the offense, save that it is either felony or misdemeanor. And in no case is there anything of value concerning social status. The Secretary of State in a few states (New Hampshire, Ohio, Iowa and at one time New York) publishes such statistics, but they are even more unsatisfactory than those issuing from Attorney Generals. Hence I should not agree with Mr. Smith's suggestion (even as a compromise or a makeshift arrangement) that the bureau be made a department in the office of the Attorney General or Secretary of State.¹⁰

Nor is the Governor's office (as was apparently the intention in Wisconsin and Washington) the proper place to locate such a bureau. The Governor's office, however, since from it issue pardons, extradition papers, etc., should be in closest touch with the bureau.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics sometimes (as in California) attempts this job. But in spite of its equipment for general industrial statistics it seems hardly advisable to charge it with a work remote from its ordinary line of business. If it were enlarged and erected into a bureau of general statistics, then, as in Indiana, criminal statistics might easily become one of its regular objects. The Indiana Bureau of Statistics approaches more nearly than any other American arrangement to the working ideal of such an office. At least it has greater possibilities than any other scheme so far proposed, in spite of the rather severe criticisms recently passed on its work. In this connection it is worth while noting that Massachusetts contemplates next year removing the unwelcome burden of collecting criminal statistics from the Board of Prison Commissioners and transferring it to the Bureau of Labor Sta-

¹⁰ (See *Jour. Crim. Law & Criminol.*, Mar., 1912, pp. 880-1.)

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tistics. There can be no objection in this case for the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics has an honorable history of excellent work behind it.

There is no absolute precedent for creating a Bureau of Criminal Statistics and putting it into a State Board of Charities and Correction as we are doing, though Pennsylvania in 1872 charged prothonotaries or clerks with sending their reports to the Board of Public Charities. The result has not been a notable success, owing largely, it would seem, to failure to employ statistical experts in the preparation of tabulations and analyses.

The practice varies somewhat in European countries, though there is usually a pretty well organized central bureau of statistics with sub-departments for criminal statistics. Sometimes the work is shared or even duplicated to a certain degree by other departments. And usually some provision is made for decentralization in certain classes of statistics. Perhaps French official statistics show this decentralization to the highest degree of any modern country. Almost every important governmental branch has its own *service de la statistique*. Thus to the Ministry of the Interior go statistics of prisons, to the Ministry of Justice general statistics of criminal judiciary. Belgium publishes a summary of criminal statistics in its general *Annuaire Statistique*, but the Minister of Justice also publishes his *Statistique Judiciaire*. In Spain the Minister of Justice gathers statistics of civil and criminal justice, penal institutions, etc. In Bulgaria since 1898 the *Direction générale de la statistique* is an independent bureau in the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture, and includes criminal statistics in its publications. In Russia the Bureau of Statistics of the Ministry of Justice publishes judicial statistics, criminal statistics and reports of prison administration. In England and Wales the Home Office publishes annually criminal statistics collected by the Statistical Branch. In Scotland the Board of Prisons and Judicial Statistics covers this work. In Ireland the general Register Office publishes an annual report on judicial statistics, including civil and criminal. German criminal statistics appear in two forms: (1) as part of the general statistics of judicial business (*allgemeinen Statistik der Rechtspflege*) published by the Imperial Ministry of Justice in *Deutschen Justizstatistik*. Contrary to the plan of the St. Petersburg Congress the individual record blanks (*Zählkarte*) are not used for this purpose; instead, tabular reports are prepared and sent in by the local courts; these in turn are worked up into general summaries of judicial business. But these summaries contain no information as to nature of the offenses, except a general division into *Verbrechen* and

Vergehen, and none as to the personal status of the offender. (2) as part, since 1883, of the *Statistik des Deutschen Reiches* published by the Imperial Statistical Bureau (which is part of the Ministry of the Interior) working with the Imperial Department of Justice. For this purpose *Zählkarte* are filled out by the local authorities (e. g. in Prussia by the *Strafvollstreckungsbehörde*), assembled by the State's Attorney's office (*Reichsanwaltschaft*), sent quarterly to the Imperial Statistical Office, and there worked up. In addition to these imperial statistics, several of the German states gather and issue statistics concerning certain phases of the crime problem. For example, the Prussian Royal Statistical Office (*Königliche statistische Landesamt*) registers capital sentences; and the Ministry of the Interior formerly published annual statistics of prisons, penitentiaries and reformatories; since the law of March 31, 1912, however, the work of supervising penal institutions has been divided between the Ministries of the Interior and of Justice; consequently, since that date the latter department publishes the figures concerning 1064 large penitentiaries and prisons, while the former issues those of the smaller prisons, reformatories, workhouses and houses of correction.¹¹ Hesse also registers capital sentences (in the *Hessische Zentralstelle für die Landesstatistik*).

Finally, some German cities also publish statistics of minor crimes. For example, the very efficient statistical office of Berlin from 1894-1903 issued annual reports on judgments of beggary and vagrancy (*Jahresberichte über die Verurteilungen wegen Bettelerei und Obdachlosigkeit beim Amtsgericht I in, Berlin*), also a report on judgments of minor misdemeanors (*Mitteilungen des statistischen Amtes der Stadt Berlin: No. 1, (1907), "Die Verurteilungen wegen Übertretungen beim Amtsgericht Berlin I in den Jahren 1904 und 1905*).

From these typical cases it is obvious that a certain decentralization of statistics is perhaps desirable, at least unavoidable. It might be altogether feasible, for example, here in Illinois, to compile criminal statistics through the Supreme Court. But such work must always be more or less remote from real judicial business. We shall have in the main to rely upon some properly equipped central office for accurate and comprehensive statistical data. This leads to the conclusion that our Illinois Bureau, if it has not already in its service a competent expert statistician, must get one; otherwise with the best intentions in the world our whole system of gathering figures will result in a large zero of information.

¹¹ (See *Statistik der zum Ressort des königlich Preussischen Ministeriums des Innern gehörenden Strafanstalten und Gefängnisse und der Korringden für das Rechnungsjahr 1911*. Berlin, 1913.)

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If our bureau can secure the sort of information I have outlined, by whatever means—diplomacy, persistence, wheedling, penalties—and can digest it through experts so as to make the figures say what they were meant to say and to say something worth while, it will have achieved the proud distinction of being the first of its kind on American soil. And the benefits will not accrue to Illinois alone. The whole nation is watching our Illinois policy of vocational education. Likewise other progressive states will probably take their cue from the success or failure of our Bureau of Criminal Statistics. We cannot afford to fail.